Isaac G Steinrucks
Book. Presented to
me by Mrs David
Gresh Greshville
February 7. 1859

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A

COLLECTION

OF

CHOICE SERMONS,

BY THE

REV. J. C. ALBERTUS HELFENSTEIN,

FORMERLY PASTOR OF GERMANTOWN, PA.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

BY I. DANIEL RUPP,

Author "Der Maertyr Geschichte," &c. &c.

PUBLISHED BY

REV. CHARLES HELFENSTEIN.

CARLISLE:

GEORGE FLEMING, PRINTER.

1832.

Entered, according to the Act of Congress, on the 17th day of January, 1832, by CH. HELFENSTEIN, in the Clerk's Office of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

PREFACE.

Translation of the Preface, to the following work, by the Rev. Dr. Helmuth, late of Philadelphia.

INDULGENT READER:—You are hereby presented with a number of public exhibitions of evangelical truths, which require no recommendation, but which, by the spirit which predominates in them, will emphatically recommend themselves to you.

One of the Rev. sons of the happily departed author, made the request of the writer of these lines, to accompany these sermons with a preface. The reason of this, was not because he was unacquainted, but because, as a near neighbour, he enjoyed the most intimate and confidential intercourse with him. He remembers also with emotion, the many pleasant hours which they enjoyed together in the presence of the Lord, and when he

was called to stand at the grave of the departed, it was from the whole heart, that he exclaimed after him, as the language of his funeral text: "I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me." 1 Sam. i. 26.

He enjoyed the pleasure of hearing him preach very often, and was always much edified, by his sermons.

Such as were acquainted with him, and have heard his pulpit exhibitions, will no doubt bear a similar testimony: and to such, the present publication will not fail, to be a pearl of great price; and they will use their efforts to encourage their children and other acquaintance, here to seek nourishment for their immortal souls, where they will also find it; for these are discussions which bear upon them the seal of the Spirit of God; discussions, which do not only explain circumstances, but also better the heart; discussions, which exhibit the walk of faith, simply, plainly, but also, fundamentally; discussions,

which know nothing of party spirit; and hence, may with propriety, be recommended to all evangelical christians.

It may be asserted with truth, and personal experience will establish the declaration, that no one who, has perused this precious treasure, and uses it with a spirit of devotion, will ever repent it.

May the Lord of his church be praised, who still in much mercy, makes himself known in this western world, to his German Evangelical Zion, and has thus far, raised up men, who both in their preaching, and writings, nourish and refresh precious souls, with the old, but invaluable truths of the gospel. May the benediction of God, for Jesus Christ's sake, rest upon these holy discourses, and may he fulfil all his word, to the blessed and neglected author of them, so that these leaves may never fade. AMEN.

Philadelphia, June 7th, 1810.

N. B.—The present publisher of this volume, contemplates, should this publication,

meet with general acceptance, issuing from the press, a second volume of the sermons of his reverend father, which he flatters himself, will be quite as interesting and edifying as the present. And should there be a call for them, he will also make arrangements, for having another edition of the present volume published.

C. H.

CONTENTS.

SERMON I.

HABAKKUK, CHAP. ii. v. 20.—"The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him." 1

SERMON II.

ISAIAH, CHAP. xlv. v. 24.—"In the Lord have I righteousness and strength." 18

SERMON III.

ROMANS, CHAP. iv. v. 8.—"But God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were sinners Christ died for us." 33

SERMON IV.

MALACHI, CHAP. iv. v. 2.—"But unto you that fear my name, shall the Son of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings." 47

SERMON V.

TITUS, CHAP. ii. v. 11, 12.—"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." 60

SERMON VI.

ROMANS, CHAP. vi. v. 11.—"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin." 71

SERMON VII.

ISAIAH, CHAP. xliv. v. 3.—"I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground." 81

SERMON VIII.

JOHN, CHAP. xx. v. 17.—"But go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." 92

SERMON IX.

ZACHARIAH, CHAP. xii. v. 10.—"And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplications." 103

SERMON X.

GALATIANS, CHAP. v. v. 22.—"But the fruit of the Spirit is love." .. 117

SERMON XI.

PSALM, xxiv. v. 15.—"The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry." 128

SERMON XII.

ISAIAH, CHAP. lv. v. 1.—"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." 144

SERMON XIII.

ISAIAH, CHAP. lv. v. 1.—"And ye that have no money, come and buy, and eat, yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." 155

SERMON XIV.

JOHN, CHAP. viii. v. 36.—"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." 167

SERMON XV.

1 JOHN, CHAP. iv. v. 16.—"God is love." 176

SERMON XVI.

GENESIS, CHAP. xv. v. 1.—"I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." 186

SERMON XVII.

LUKE, CHAP. xiv. v. 16—21.—"A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: and sent his servant at supper-time, to say to them that were bidden, come; for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent, began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it—I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them—I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. So that servant came, and shewed his Lord these things." 198

SERMON XVIII.

LUKE, CHAP. XIV. V. 21, 22.—"Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room." 213

SERMON XIX.

ACTS, CHAP. II. V. 1—4.—"And when the day of Penticost was fully come, they were all with one accord, in one place; and suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." 224

SERMON XX.

MATTHEW, CHAP. VXII. V. 11—14.—"And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment; and he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then saith the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen." 238

SERMON XXI.

1 JOHN, CHAP. IV. V. 13.—"Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit." 242

SERMON I.*

HABAKKUK, CHAP. 2, V. 20.

"The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him."

INTRODUCTION.

MANY are the glorious names, brethren, which are ascribed in Holy writ, to our blessed Mediator and Redeemer, Jesus Christ, by which his mediatorial office is made known. Amongst others he is called *"Wonderful."* Isa. 9, 6.

Now, we call that wonderful, which transcends the ordinary powers and operations of nature, consequently, that which is extraordinary and supernatural. And in this application of the term, we find that all things relative to Christ, are wonderful, extraordinary and supernatural. His holy, immaculate conception, incarnation and birth, were wonderful. The *union* of the divine and human nature, is wonderful; and wonderful are his life, doctrines, sufferings, his death, his resurrection and ascension, by which he purchased redemption, and an inexhaustible treasure of blessings, for the indigent sinner: and, he manifests himself equally wonderful in the effectual application of purchased redemption. Every awakened, enlightened, and truly regenerated soul united to God, constitutes a miracle in the sight of angels and of men; as it is a new creation—a production of a new principle, which had no existence before: and to accomplish this, more than common power is necessary,—it requires extraordinary supernatural power, and grace; and, the means employed to bring a soul to this, are *wonderful*, extraordinary and

* Preached before a General Synod, held in Philadelphia.

supernatural, proceeding only from him who is called "*Wonderful*,"—from Jesus Christ: "Who is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." 1 Cor. i, 30. Of whom it may emphatically be said: "Know ye that the Lord leadeth his saints wonderfully." Ps. iv, 4.*

The external and visible church of Christ on earth, experiences this in general; but the internal and invisible church, or the penitent and believing, who are reconciled to God by Christ, are to enjoy this special and efficacious experience, collectively and individually: particularly when Jesus in a special manner receives the soul into a close union with the Father, by the power of the Holy Ghost: and after a full espousal, lives and abides in it. 2 Cor. vi, 16. This, indeed, is so wonderful, so extraordinary, that he only is capable of forming a just conception of it, who has realized these things himself. Our whole nature, both outward and inward, must be subdued and slain. All things, external and internal are brought into a holy and reverent silence. The true repose of God's people, the genuine Sabbath of the soul, is now celebrated. Oh! the glorious feelings, the happy sensations, not to be expressed by words!—"The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him."

These words, therefore, afford me occasion to speak, in reliance upon assistance from on high, of

THEME—*The presence of the Lord Jesus in his church in general, and of his union with truly regenerated and believing souls, in particular; and of the happy consequences which flow from it.* In canvassing this subject, two particulars claim our attention.

DIVISION I. There is an important truth of Christianity here declared:—and

II. There are happy consequences and effects here exhibited, as flowing from it.

First part.—The first particular, or important truth, asserted in the words of the text, is: "The Lord is in his holy temple."

* Luther's version.

Since I am led by this subject, to speak of practical piety, or of such matters in particular, as have the strongest tendency to promote true godliness, I shall not occupy much of your time in explaining words: yet I would remark, for the information of all present, that we are to understand by the *Lord*, spoken of here in the text, in general, the blessed *Trinity*, but especially the Second Person of the Godhead, the Son of God, our blessed Mediator and Redeemer.

By his holy temple we are to understand, in general terms, his church: but especially the whole community of truly regenerated and believing souls, and each of them individually; as described by the apostle Paul. Eph. ii, 21, and 1 Cor. iii, 16. Let us inquire then, 1. How the Lord is in his church in general. 2. How he is in the community of his saints, and each of them individually.

First: The Lord Jesus is in the temple of his church, in general, by his word and gracious gospel, by the pure and faithful preaching thereof: for by it, as by the word of the law, the transgressor has his sins, his offences and his trespasses with his guilt and danger set before him. In relation to this, Jehovah has given the command to "Cry aloud, and spare not; lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew unto my people their transgressions, and unto the house of Jacob their sins." Isa. lvii, 1. And, again, through the word of the precious gospel, he comforts all who have been brought to an experimental knowledge of themselves: for unto them he causes peace and salvation to be proclaimed. As it is written: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God, speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned." Isa. xl. 1, 2. And "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for their's is the kingdom of heaven—blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted," &c. Mat. v. 1—2.

For this purpose, God, from the beginning, has, and still continues, to raise up in his church such pastors and teachers who are qualified by a spiritual experience—such who are not only instructed according to the letter,

but divinely instructed as to the nature of the kingdom of heaven; truly regenerated and converted souls, by whom, as the visible means, and instruments in his hands, he makes known his word, and manifests his most holy will. It is, therefore, a special mark of the gracious presence of the Lord Jesus in his church, or in a particular congregation, when his word abounds therein, when it is purely and faithfully preached according to his will; and when there are in the church, truly converted and pious teachers and pastors, who are taught by Christ. On the contrary, it is a mark of the Lord's displeasure, and that he has withdrawn his presence from the church, when among her members, or in any particular congregation, stupidity, ignorance, spiritual blindness, and ungodliness prevail. And when there are in the church such teachers only as are themselves unconverted blind guides, who will ultimately with those, whom they so badly lead, fall into the ditch. The Lord threatens this as a just punishment, when his word and faithful ministers are despised, or neglected by his professing people. "Behold! saith the Lord, I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing of the words of the Lord." Amos, viii, 11. And he threatened the church at Ephesus that he would come quickly and remove the candlestick of the gospel out of its place, except "they repented and done their first works." Rev. ii, 5. Ecclesiastical history affords abundant evidence that there were such awful vicissitudes in times which are past. Nor is the present period of the church's history wanting in evidence to prove the fulfilment of similar threatenings at the present day.

Secondly: The Lord is in the temple of his church, by the powerful operation of his Spirit. Thereby making his word and the preaching of it quickening to the soul. Thereby he blesses the faithful endeavors, and the arduous charge of pious teachers. By this Spirit he effectually calls and converts sinners from darkness unto his marvellous light; for, "he is a Spirit of grace." Zach. xii, 10. It is also a mark of the gracious presence of the Lord Jesus in his church, or in a particu-

lar congregation when there are many penitent, believing, and truly converted souls, found in it. On the contrary, it is a mark of his displeasure, and of his absence, when every thing is lifeless, and buried in nominal christianity; when few, or none are found engaged in the christian cause, or shine in the church or congregation, as spiritual lights. David himself complains of this, when he exclaims: "Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men." Ps. xii. 1. On another occasion, however, the Lord Jesus glories in his church, saying: "For lo! the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on earth; spring is at hand, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; the fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vine with her tender grapes, give a good smell." Cant. ii. 11—13.

Thirdly: The Lord Jesus is in the temple of his church; by the holy sacraments; by holy baptism, and by the holy supper. These are visible signs and seals of himself, of his saving ordinances, and benefits, and of his gracious presence in his church. Whosoever despises these, despises him; for of the holy supper he has expressly said, "This do in remembrance of me." Luke, xxii. 19. Namely, to the remembring and visibly sealing of what he has done for us, and that he is thereby, in a spiritual manner, really present with, and in us, by his grace and spirit.

Fourthly: The Lord Jesus is in the temple of his church in general as a gracious, merciful God and Saviour, who has no pleasure in the death of the sinner, but "that the wicked turn from his evil way and live." Ezek. xxxiii. 11. "And whosoever cometh unto him, he will in no wise cast out." John vi. 47. "But who will have all men to be saved, and come unto the knowledge of the truth." 1 Tim. ii. 4. But if the wicked turn not, he as a just and holy God, will "whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready; he hath also prepared for him the instrument of death, he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors." Ps. vii. 12, 13. "Who shall be revealed," at the end of the world, "from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance

on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." 2 Thess. i. 7—9.

Thus, and in this manner, the Lord Jesus is in the temple of his church in general. But he is still more gloriously, and essentially in his holy temple, in the community of his children, his true, internal, invisible church—in the heart, in the souls of the truly converted and regenerated. This gracious presence of the Lord Jesus in the soul, exceeds his presence in the temple of his church, as far as the reality of the New Testament does, the types and shadows of the old. But let us examine this matter for ourselves, and it will be evident to us.

The Lord Jesus is in the holy temple of the hearts of his children in common. By a true, living, and saving faith, 1 Cor. xiii. 5. By virtue of which the soul is enabled, with an assured confidence to apply Christ and his precious merits, his righteousness unto itself to the forgiveness of sin. And, therefore, enjoys many sweet and comfortable "refreshings from the presence of the Lord." The soul receives this grace after it has endured the agonies of conviction, and, as it were, when Jesus imparts to it the first kiss of love. But in this there is nothing as yet permanent and abiding: at this crisis the changes in the soul are very numerous: at one time the penitent sinner can apply Jesus and the gracious merits of his blood to himself, and at another he cannot: at one time he enjoys his presence sensibly, at another time he has to complain as it were of being wholly forsaken. Hundreds, yea, even thousands, remain a long time in this condition; commonly because they know not, or desire not to know their prerogatives—they do not believe that more remains in reserve for them, until the Lord makes new discoveries of his grace. For

The Lord is in the holy temple of the hearts of his children: especially through assuring faith; whereof Paul speaks: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." Eph. iii, 17. And when this faith is wrought in the soul, Jesus saith: "At that day ye shall know

that I am in the Father and ye in me, and I in you." John, xiv, 20. But this assured faith, "is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Heb. xi, 1. It leaves not the least doubt nor uncertainty in the soul. It is indeed not equally strong at all times, but durable and abiding. Through this assuring faith the Lord espouses the soul forever. Hos. ii. 19. By virtue of which, he abides in it; although the believer may not at all times be conscious of it. Yet by the assurance of this faith, he knows that Jesus will abide in him and he in him; for by reason of this faith he is assured that Jesus dwells by faith in his soul. Rom. i, 17. This faith opens the whole treasury of the all-sufficiency of the Lord Jesus, and affords the soul access to the Redeemer, to receive at his table all things necessary to nourish, to strengthen, and to increase its growth in the divine life.

The Lord Jesus is in the temple of the hearts of his children. 3. By his Holy Spirit: "And hereby," says John, "we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit he has given us." 1 John, iii, 24. And as long as a soul has not received the Spirit which Christ promised and actually gave unto his apostles, with all his gifts, (the power of performing miracles only excepted) so long it neither enjoys an assurance of faith, nor Christ and the fulness of his grace: because he is the spirit of this faith. 2 Cor. iv, 13. The author thereof. By this Spirit the remissions of sin, justification and sanctification are instantaneously sealed. Eph. vi, 13, Cor. i, 22. By this Spirit, adoption, and the assurance of eternal life are given. Rom. viii, 15—17. By this same Spirit, Jesus grants the soul perfect liberty in the practice of true godliness, so that the duties of religion are no longer performed in a legal, but in a voluntary and evangelical manner. John, viii, 30. "Because he is the Spirit of liberty." 2 Cor. iii, 17. Through him Christ administers a spiritual unction, whereby believers are taught all things necessary to be known while here, to the perfecting of their salvation. 1 John, ii, 20. Through this spirit, his children "judge all, and they are judged by no man." 1 Cor. ii, 15. Because the Spirit takes

of the things of Christ, and shows them unto them. John, xvi, 15. Oh, the glorious prerogatives of the children of God! Oh, the blissful presence of Jesus!

Thus he reveals himself in the holy temple of the hearts of his children at certain seasons, and his presence is so glorious, that no mortal tongue is able to express it; when he leads us with himself into the inner chamber of our hearts, when he, as our friend and brother, holds sweet converse with us, when he, at such times in particular, strengthens the eyes of our faith, when he, as it were, fills us with the spirit, when he leads us into himself! Oh the glorious! Oh the blessed seasons! Here is more than Mount Tabor, here it is heaven itself in us! Here the soul wishes, and desires to erect tabernacles, and to abide forever. But at once the vail of the flesh is drawn between. Still the Lord is in his holy temple, but not in such brightness of the Spirit and of faith, as before. These happy seasons, these gracious moments are but seldom; and we could not even bear them often. But there are many, who seldom if ever, have this bright manifestation of the Spirit and of faith. This is, however, their own fault, as we shall shortly hear.

What think you of this, my friends! Is this not a glorious presence of the Lord Jesus in his church? Is not this especially a heavenly, a blessed indwelling of himself, in the hearts of his children? Does not this exceed the other, as far as the mid-day exceeds the first glimmering of day? Yes, this is utterly undeniable. But let us consider the happy consequence and effects, connected with, as it is written: "The Lord is in his holy temple."

Second part: "Let all the earth keep silence before him." This we may consider in two points of view.

First: When the whole church of Christ, either throughout the world, or in a certain province, in a country, or in any particular congregation, is greatly declining through her own neglect;—when nothing but mere, vain, professional and nominal christianity, and mere ceremony prevails; and moreover, when there is a great degree of spiritual blindness and ignorance,

in regard to the dealings of the Lord with the soul; when there is much spiritual blindness, in relation to the things which are of the Spirit of God: and when those whom we expect above all others, to be enlightened; when teachers and preachers are blind guides, masters of outward ceremonies, without spirit and life in their doctrines, and in their deportment;—it is then that the enemies of the church, the ungodly of this world, the dissembling, the hypocrite and others, take occasion to depose the church, speak and write against her; nay, they will mock, they will abuse, they will blaspheme her, on account of the indifference the carelessness, nay even on account of her lifeless members; because there is neither power, nor life of the Spirit found, although the externals may be in conformity to the word of God. And should there even be here and there any retired Isrealite in the church, he will rise up against her, and testify against the ungodliness of her members, and threaten to forsake Babel. To this the word of God, history and daily experience bear record.

But when spirit and life are in the church; when besides external, internal christianity, is practised, and its effects are visible; when there are enlightened, and truly energetical preachers in the church, who not only preach the acquired wisdom of man, or as spiritual thieves from books, but who speak and act from conviction, from their own experience of the power of the Holy Ghost: when there are living witnesses of the truth as it is in Jesus: when there are awakened, enlightened, and regenerated members in the church, or in a particular congregation; and when the Lord Jesus is visibly present: when, besides outward religion, the religion of the Spirit also prevails;—the enemies of the church have then to hold their peace: hypocrites, dissemblers, and other enemies of the church, will then be made to blush, and their mouths are stopped, when they see the footsteps of Christ. And those, who, on account of the lifelessness which prevailed in the church, withdrew themselves from the outward fellowship, will willingly return, when they find Jesus and the operations of his Spirit thus prevailing.

Secondly: This leads me to take another view of the text, "Let all the earth keep silence before the Lord." I will endeavor to present the subject in a different light, and would to God that it may be yet more plain, powerful and impressive!

I have briefly shown you how the Lord Jesus is in his church in general, and the close union with him, and his indwelling in every true child of God, in a special manner through the assurance of faith, and the Holy Ghost. Perhaps many a one has been thinking, or may now imagine, it is impossible for a person to come thus far in this life: these things are reserved for us in eternity. But I answer thee, oh man, first of all become silent: let satan and his deceitfulness have no longer place in you! Be not led so far astray by your natural depravity. Suffer not your prejudices, which you have against genuine experience, fume and rage within you. Attend to the voice of Jesus in your soul, whereby he has called you, even in the storms of your passions; resist his Spirit no longer, and you will see otherwise. I tell you in the name of Jesus, that you are yet without Christ and his grace, and cannot enjoy his presence, if you do not give heed without prejudice, and meditate, and yield to the influence of the Spirit.

But the weak in faith may perhaps exclaim: my God! what shall I do to become united with Jesus, that I may be a partaker of assurance of faith, and of the Holy Ghost? I have long since been convinced that all is not right with me; and the Lord has even now in a special manner revealed this to me. Precious soul, I answer, be silent before the Lord: "In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." Isa. xxx. 15. Quench that natural fire, lay aside your formality, and pause within yourself. When you are in such a condition, that all is calm in and about you, and you feel it sensibly; launch not into the labyrinth of worldly cares; but, remain in this calm, in which the Lord has placed you, and lift up your heart through the Spirit, and then you will experience what will come to pass. For in short you must remain in more quietness of the Spirit, and learn to know yourself, or else, all is in vain. The

external exercises of religion are in themselves good, and approved of in the word of God, such as, praying, singing, and reading in congregations, by the children of God; I hold and visit such meetings myself. But these will profit you little in this respect, if you do not appear in secret before God and dedicate yourself to Jesus in the silence, which he, as I know, has frequently begun to produce within you, although unregarded by you.

For finally: Our object must be to be silent before the Lord, and acknowledge ourselves, with all the blessings received through the grace of God, as nothing. We can never, otherwise attain to any assurance of faith, or have a sure foundation in a state of grace, or attain to the enjoyment of the presence of Christ, promised in his word. To prove this, I would adduce the case of Elias. As the Lord was about revealing himself to Elias: "There came first a strong wind, but the Lord was not in it; afterwards an earthquake, but the Lord was not in this; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; finally, there came a still small voice, in this the Lord revealed himself to Elias." 1 Kings, ix. 11—14.

He that hath ears to hear, let him hear, and read, in the silent resignation of the Spirit to the Lord.

APPLICATION.

"The Lord is in his holy temple, let all the earth keep silence before him." In such times, and in similar circumstances do we live at present. The Lord has arisen, and hath remembered Zion his church, that had been, for a long time since the reformation in a Laodician state. Jesus who had hitherto apparently slept in the hinder part, in the ship of his church, has arisen. He, as the Self-existent, through the efficient means of his word, and a faithfully preached gospel, has gone forth throughout the land. At home and from abroad, we hear of great excitements, of powerful emotions among the people. The Lord makes his word known through a multitude of evangelists, awakened and faithful preachers. Witnesses, clouds of witnesses, arise in favor of what is preached in the power of the Spirit of God, and

according to his word. Blessed be God! who permits me, his unworthy servant to hear, to see, and to experience this practically! Indeed our part of the world is visited and blessed, especially within the last twenty years, to such a degree as is truly wonderful.

The Lion, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, Jesus, through his faithful ministers, and servants, roars, who should not fear. The Lord himself speaks, who should not prophecy? Who, especially when he knows that he, by the free grace of God, has received this vocation, would not speak, call and cry aloud? Who would suffer such a precious opportunity to pass by? Have you heard it my friends? Have you heard it? Jesus of a truth has arisen in his church and among us every where, through the pungent preaching of his word, and the powerful operations of his Spirit, thereby producing true repentence and faith in his atoning blood. How many are there?—would to God I could speak otherwise—how many are there regardless of all this? Who are still blind, deaf, dumb, miserable, nay, spiritually dead!! How many are there in the respective divisions of the church of Christ, who exclaim in relation to their denomination, "Here is the temple of the Lord! Here is the temple of the Lord! Here is the temple of the Lord!!" To be saved, you must be united with us. How many are there who have no other than a mere profession or nominal religion; depending on this or that outward form! Who, I know not whether to say they serve God, themselves or others; but I believe the latter to be most in point. For what kind of christianity, or worship is it, to engage in mere rituals; where enmity and bitterness exist against each other, and denying the life and power of christianity!! And when ten-fold as much is subverted by life and conduct as is even professed. Wo to this wretched pretext for christianity! Wo to such despicable religion! Well may it be said of such, "They take my covenant in their mouth, seeing they hate instruction, and cast my words behind them." Ps. l. 16, 17. "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honor me with their lips; but their heart is far from me: but in vain they do worship

me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Mat. xv. 8, 9. Whosoever among you, that depends on externals, be he Reformed, or Lutheran, or of any other name, be he who he may, who thus flatters himself that he is a christian, deceives himself. True, Christ is present through these means in his church; but it is spiritually, and "whosoever has not the Spirit of Christ is none of his." For what does it profit thee, oh man! if you have been baptized after this or that external mode: or if you hear the word, and attend the outward supper of the Lord, or observe other externals; unless Christ, by faith, dwells in your heart! unless you, as a penitent sinner, lay hold of Jesus and his blood-bought merits, by faith! All this is in vain, it avails you nothing. You have "hewn to yourself broken cisterns, that can hold no water."

But attention, my friends! The Lord is in his holy temple! Jesus is here! Not on account of this handsomely adjusted building. But he is among you who are members of the church of Christ, though you belong to different congregations. Jesus in compassionate love is here, in reference to such as, in repentence and faith, so much need him, and according to his promise, he is with his disciples and followers who are here. He is here present, offering the sinner his grace. I do it cheerfully, in his name. Do you not feel the power of his presence? Do you not feel doubt, disquietude, and anguish in your soul, on account of your present condition Does not your conscience accuse you as guilty? Sinner! sinner!! It is Jesus, the power of his presence, by the preaching of his word, and the powerful operations of his spirit. Now is the time—it is high time that you ground your prejudices, and submit in silence to the influence of the Spirit. Let not Jesus depart from your hearts. I charge you by your salvation do it not. Surrender the strong hold of your hearts! yield! let grace conquer! If you delay, the devil, the world, and your own flesh and blood, or all at once, may come upon you as a flood, and stifle these convictions in the first travail of your soul. Cry! cry aloud this moment: "Lord! Lord!! Lord Jesus have mercy on me, a poor

sinner! Lord Jesus, what shall I do to be saved? Enter, enter thou blessed of the Lord, enter my heart, melt it, pierce it, bow it, and humble it, that thou mayest by true repentance and faith, become mine and dwell within me, with all the merits of thy blood. Oh! that Jesus would come thus upon all of you with his spirit! Oh! that he would in reality manifest his presence unto us, as he is in the midst of us!

And, you who are weak in faith, *you can* speak of the presence of Jesus in the power of the spirit; for you feel his presence. My dear brethren take refuge in the privileges purchased for you by Jesus. How long will you remain satisfied with half a Saviour? How long will you torment yourselves? How long shall numberless and unnecessary tempests pass over your souls? Do become silent; surrender yourselves submissively unto the Lord; and plead with Jesus, for a full assurance of faith; for the spirit of adoption, and in a word, for every blessing which he purchased for his children; entreat him to introduce you into a perfect state of liberty. As surely as Jesus lives, you will receive him wholly. Think not that these things are reserved for you only in eternity. No! no! all this you can obtain whilst here. Other blessings are reserved for you in eternity. Deny all and become, as it were, nothing. The Lord himself will bring you to this: sursender yourself wholly to him; then he will most assuredly take possession of your hearts, in the fullness of his grace. Your Jesus, your heavenly bridegroom is here, to espouse you for ever through the assurance of faith; therefore lay hold on his promises, cleave unto him. It is impossible for him to dismiss you without a blessing.

But you, who are espoused to Jesus! Render him thanks, laud and bless him for his grace. Use the liberty in which Jesus has placed you, according to his will. Rejoice on account of your glorious prerogatives, and let all redound to his honor and praise. Use your privileges and regard not what the world may say concerning them. Be satisfied that you have Jesus, and that he dwells in you. Speak for him, and do all you

can in his name, for the salvation of souls: show yourselves, according to the opportunity you may have, as spiritual prophets, priests and kings. Follow at all times, as obedient sheep his voice, whereby he calls you to walk in love, in humility, in simplicity and uprightness of heart. Thereby your walk shall be in heaven, as Jesus is in you, by his grace and Spirit, upon earth.

And now, reverend *auditory!* Beloved and dear *brethren* in the Lord! You, who are called with me to labor for the salvation of souls! Consider how arduous our office is; what an important calling we have; consider that all the souls by whom we have been called, are in a special manner committed to our charge, by Jesus, the Chief Shepherd. Consider that we must give an account on that day, not only of ourselves, but if one soul should be lost, through our negligence, of that soul we must give the strictest account! Oh! what an awful day will that be for unfaithful ministers, who neglect themselves, and the souls committed to their charge—who have served them with hay, straw and stubbles—mere husks;—and who have withheld from them the substance, because they had it not themselves; who are blind guides, who subvert more by their preaching, life and deportment, than they profit! However, it depends not wholly on us, yet we can be useful instruments in the hand of God.

"The Lord is in his holy temple:" Jesus has visited his church graciously. Shall we hold our peace? Shall we be silent, since others call and cry aloud in the name of Jesus? Shall we be the last to stand up on the walls of Zion, as spiritual watchmen, since others have for a long time, been standing thereon, and hundreds of souls have been awakened through them, from a sleep of spiritual security? Oh! my beloved brethren! Our German nation in this country, is in a great degree, but a rough, uncultivated field. The greater part of them, depends on mere profession, on nominal, and formal christianity. The spirit of the world animates too many. They have adopted numberless, unavailing, and fruitless notions, and they keep off from the reality of religion, as it is in Christ. They are divided into numerous sects.

And to whom, think you, can this charge be laid. They reflecting say, if teachers and preachers were more devout, it would never have come to this; or, if even now all would rise for Jesus, it would soon be better. The Lord be praised! Here and there, among us Germans, things have a fine aspect, glorious fruits of the word, and of the Spirit are visible. But, Oh, that these revivals were more general—Oh! that the winter would soon be past, and spring approach, and that the voice of the turtle-dove, among thousands of others, may be heard, and a plentiful summer of unfeigned christianity may soon follow. My *brethren*, I charge you by the Chief Shepherd, Jesus, by the salvation of his blood-purchased souls, let us all be found faithful ministers and stewards of the mysteries of God. Let us appear before God in secret prayer and supplication without ceasing, for ourselves and especially for the souls committed to our charge. Let us pray to the Lord for each other, by day and by night, let us pray individually and simultaneously for each other, that he may qualify us, by a spiritual experience, and that he may increase this experience in those who have enjoyed it: for without personal experience, a preacher cannot, be he ever so learned, preach the way of salvation with power and energy. He must, above all things, be in possession of this experience of the power of this religion himself, if he wishes rightly and successfully to lead the lambs and sheep of Christ. And what does it avail, when we have this spirit in our souls, if we do not apply it properly; if we are captivated by prejudices, or if brotherly love is wanting? Let us, by the grace of God, lay aside all fear, faint-heartedness, doubt, prejudice, and every other hindrance. Beloved brethren! you, who bewail with me the loss of Joseph, the schisms in Zion, let us break forth in the name and power of Jesus. Let us be spent and die for Jesus: I tender you, in testimony thereof, the hand of brotherly love, before the omniscent God, who tries the hearts and reins of men; I will unite with you—let us advance: the rest must and will follow us. And should we even suffer tribulation and persecution, and should many enemies arise against us, what

does that signify! We have Jesus on our side; we have a rich Father in heaven, who is in the possession of all things, he can provide for us. Let us preach Jesus and him crucified! Let us preach the necessity of repentance, and a living faith in him—let us preach sanctification through the blood of Christ—the necessity of an upright life and conduct, through him. Let us as much as possible, direct our hearers from the external means, to the internal, even to Jesus himself. We need not apprehend any danger that external religion will suffer thereby. No! no! thereby it will be brought to its proper form and order. We will thereby, gain over pious parents, upon whose faith we can with confidence baptize children; or at least, they will attain to such a knowledge, as will induce them to observe their duty. We will then have worthy guests at the Lord's table, and not all nominal christians, though it is not our prerogative to exclude such altogether. We must needs suffer them, if the Lord suffers them. We will not only have hearers, but doers of the word. And we have the assurance, as pious and faithful servants in time to come, to enter the joys of our Lord. Amen, Lord Jesus, *amen*.

SERMON II.

ISAIAH, CHAP. 45, V. 24.

"In the Lord have I righteousness and strength."

INTRODUCTION.

Nothing can be more acceptable, more consoling, and more reviving to a soul desirous of salvation, than an assurance, through the Spirit of God, that the Son of God, Jesus Christ is to his children and to such an one, a Captain of Salvation, made perfect through suffering, as Paul testifies, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Heb. ii. 10.

We repeat it: nothing can be more acceptable, more consoling and more reviving than a vital assurance of this important truth. Whether we contemplate such a person, either in the beginning of true repentance and conversion, or in an advanced state, or in the actual assurance of a state of grace. Do we contemplate a person in the beginning of illumination and engaged in seeking; experience teaches us, that there are diverse temptations, such as unbelief, doubt, dejection, let loose upon him, just as it pleases God to deal with him. Let us also consider the joy—the transporting joy—the comfort and the refreshing of which the soul partakes, when these truths are revealed in it, and it is thereby placed in such a condition as to apply them to itself. In truth, this is the entrance into the fellowship of God, and of Jesus—the beginning of true grace, and from thence the soul advances, with firm steps to a living assurance of this state. And if we look upon such persons as are truly grounded in grace; experience exhibits them as earnestly engaged in crucifying the old man,

the flesh, its sinful lusts and desires, and mortifying its carnal members—engaged in wrestling and fighting against satan, the world, and sin; and in the pursuit of true holiness, and in increasing efforts to press closer into the fellowship of God and Jesus Christ. But what makes them so joyful and confident herein? By what are they more revived, than by the important truths, afforded them by the assurance that God—that Jesus Christ has neither forsaken, nor neglected them; that he will support them, stand by them, assist them; and as he is the author, so also will he be the finisher of their faith. Herein indeed consists their whole strength, their power, their invincible heroism.

And, behold friends! As such St. Paul represents Jesus. *First:* As a Captain of Salvation, made perfect through suffering. As one who advances, as leader before his children, in the way of life, who purchased, by his obedience, by his suffering, by the shedding of his blood, and by his death, a complete right, to wash and purify us from all sin, and to redeem them from the guilt and punishment thereof, and who reconciled them unto God, and who continues to lead them—qualifies them with power from on high; nay, manifests his power unto them until they obtain, under his guidance, the end of their faith—their soul's salvation. This is the foundation, and the only foundation, on which the anchor of hope of a penitent soul, seeking salvation, rests. He gives the soul an actual assurance of salvation, and on this the building of a state of grace rests immoveably. Enlightened souls, children of God well know these things; they, therefore, cry aloud in the words of the text: "In the Lord have I righteousness and strength."

Accordingly, we will set before you, *The true glory of a sincere christian and child of God, as the only ground of his salvation.*

And would that this discourse might flow upon your hearts, as the rain upon the grass, and the dew upon the herb, and bring fourth much fruit; so that it may tend to your edification! Lord Jesus! thou who art righteousness and strength to thy children, grant us thy blessing, give us thy increase. *Amen!*

The text which we have read, leads us to two considerations.

DIVISION I. The glory of a true christian and child of God.

II. The only ground on which it rests.

First part: How great a difference between a worldling, and a true christian! As far as heaven is from earth, so different are they in their affections and inclinations. The worldling not unfrequently, boasts of the wisdom of this world, of his wealth, of his honor and reputation; and frequently his boast is that of Sodom! But the christian's glory is this: "In the Lord have I strength and righteousness."

When we consider him who glories in righteousness, it is easily understood what is meant by it, namely, the righteousness of Christ; that perfect obedience and most precious merits, which he purchased in satisfying the divine law, by his suffering, by shedding his own blood, and by his death; through, and on account of which, penitent and believing souls are acquitted from the guilt and punishment of sin, and received into the fellowship of God's children, and made heirs of eternal life. It is the righteousness acceptable to God; and is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith." Rom. i. 17. A righteousness of which we become partakers without works, by his grace, "Through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ." Rom. iii. 27. For God hath made Christ sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." 2 Cor. v. 21.

Then, since this righteousness was purchased by Christ, and is bestowed by God upon man without works, out of mere grace, and is applied unto him by a living faith; hence it naturally follows, that man has not such a righteousness by nature: "What is man, that he should be clean? and he who is born of a woman, that he should be righteous." Job, xv. 14. "For in thy sight shall no man living be justified." Ps. cxiv. 2. "There is none righteous, no, not one." Rom. iii. 10.

Man, therefore, is by nature in the sight of God, in the blood of uncleanness, under the wrath of God, under the curse of the law, and under eternal condemnation.

But, when the grace of God takes hold of man, to bring him out of his misery, and convinces him of sin, of righteousness, and of a judgment;—when God grants him enlightening of the eyes of his understanding, and when he touches his heart and makes him deeply feel his misery;—when, after enduring anguish, sorrow, and fear, Jesus manifests himself with his grace to his soul;—when also, all doubt and unbelief are dispersed by the powerful operations of the Holy Ghost, and true faith is implanted in his heart;—when by virtue of these, he begins to bow before Jesus, to seek him, to cry aloud to him, to stretch forth his arms after him, and unceasingly to continue steadfast till the hour of his glorious visitation draws nigh;—then the sun of righteousness arises in full splendor in his soul. Then he is redeemed, by him, from sin, and reconciled unto God; then all anguish, fear and sorrow, on account of his sin and guilt, are dispelled, because he is actually absolved from all sin; then "he is clothed with the garment of salvation, and covered with the robe of righteousnes." Isa. lxi. 10. And in this manner, in fellowship with God, we are made meet for the adoption and the inheritance of saints in light, that such an one can say, "In the Lord have I righteousness."

Man must, therefore, be assured of his interest in the righteousness of Christ, and of his justification. And this is by virtue of a true experience of something undeniably true; although worldly-minded and carnal men, are not able to comprehend these things. Those who have experienced this great and unspeakable favor, know what takes place within them, how cheering, how powerful, how convincing is their interest in Christ, insomuch that they can say, with certainty, "I know in whom I have believed." 2 Tim. i. 12. Nay, with some this assurance is so full, that it is declared unto them, as it were, by a voice: "Be of good chear, your sins are forgiven." Notwithstanding this, no general rule can be laid down, since God affords one an assu-

rance of salvation in this, and another in another way; yet it is common to all, who are justified by Christ, that they receive a lively hope, and that a peace and joy of the Spirit, are manifested in them, of which they could scarcely form any conception. Although the way and manner in which a soul arrives at this experience, by the grace of God, be diversified, the greater, the more precious the gift is, the greater is the exertion and the more earnest will be the wrestling and struggling it will cost, until it is actually attained; and many a dark cloud of temptation will pass over, before a full assurance of these things is manifested to the soul. Nevertheless, Jesus will not abandon his work, in such a person, when it is attended to in sincerity and in truth. He is the Captain of Salvation who was perfected through suffering, and this may happen sooner or later, still the believer will ultimately be enabled to say with certainty, "I have righteousness," (or more properly, according to the original, "righteousnesses," in the plural.)

If a person has advanced so far in the work of his soul's salvation, as to be justified from his sins by the blood of Christ; the fruits thereof must also be manifested in his life and conduct—in all his thoughts, words and actions. Where the righteousness of faith is truly in the soul; there it is impossible to prevent the righteousness of life from appearing also. This is the beginning of true holiness, wrought in the soul by the Spirit of God, and which is inseparably connected with the former; "Because Christ Jesus is made of God, unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." 1 Cor. i. 30. And he gave himself to redeem "them from all iniquity, and to purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Paul, therefore, exhorts, "Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." This is one of the most prominent marks of the state of grace, whereby a person is assured of his interest in Christ; for Jesus saith, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." John xv. 14. And if

we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with him. Nay, the farther a person advances in true holiness, by the grace of God, and in the justification of life, the stronger will be his assurance of his interest in Christ, and the closer will be his fellowship with him, and the Father, in the Holy Ghost. It is, therefore, a vain imagination; nay, an abominable and infamous delusion of the devil, to depend on the righteousness of Christ, where there is not at the same time, the righteousness of life, in a man; and if he does not, with all diligence, follow after true holiness. It cannot possibly be otherwise, for we must have the mind and spirit of Christ in all our doings, and in all our dealings we must manifest it;—it must be so certain and sure, that we can say with confidence, "I have righteousness." Faith must be shown by works. "Our light must so shine before men, that they seeing our good works may glorify our father who is in heaven." Where this is the case, and when the soul is in this condition, then it may truly be said, "I have righteousness."

This is the glory of a true christian and child of God, on the one hand; we shall farther examine, how it may be said, "I have strength."

When a person has a true assurance of his salvation —when assured of the righteousness of the Redeemer, and when the Spirit of God, with his holy and purifying influence, has taken up his abode in the soul; by virtue of which, he begins with zeal, to follow the true paths of life and holiness; then a warfare is commenced—then a host of enemies present themselves, who are lying in wait to present every kind of obstacles, and to cast stones of stumbling in the way. Here old Adam defends himself: our innate depravity is determined not to be dethroned. There are certain favorite sins, which we too readily excuse. Satan with his crew, summonses the whole force and artifice of hell, against the soul. The world, and its sons and daughters, with their works, their manners and customs, beset us with nets and snares. Here Satan makes his greatest effort, lest there be any thing wanting to the attack of the chrisitian, by a wicked world. Here power is indeed

required, in order to meet these numerous enemies of our salvation, and to conquer them effectually; because it is difficult to subdue old Adam, to ob'ain dominion over him, to renounce our favorite sins, to shun the nets and snares of Satan, to conquer and to escape the fascinations of this world, by self-denial.

Yet, it may be, that a soul justified by Christ, has, notwithstanding, strength sufficient to withstand these numerous and powerful enemies, to fight against them and to vanquish them, once and again, yea, to bring t' em ultimately under dominion. Sense is taken captive under the obedience of Christ,—the will must be humbled, it must be denied, and made subject to the will of God; nay, it must be made conformable to the will of Christ. Old Adam must be crucified with Christ; and those members, which are on earth, must be mortified. Every sin, also, the dearest bosom sin must be removed and brought under dominion. Satan must be withstood by faith; and force must be repelled by force, so that, by prudence, diabolical artfulness may be evaded. The world must be vanquished, together with its works, customs and manners, which become not the christian, are to be renounced and cast behind us. The soul also brings its main force against itself, in order to be subdued, so as to eagerly pursue the righteousness of life, true sanctification, and to imitate the Saviour, that he may walk according to his commands.

We may readily conceive, and experience teaches, that the strength of a christian is not at all times equal, particularly in the beginning, it is not what it will become in an advanced state. This we may readily comprehend. Wherein does the whole strength of a christian consist, but in a proper and expert use of the armour, of which Paul makes mention: "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, having on the breast-plate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the firey darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." These are weapons which require a

valiant spiritual soldier to use successfully. In the beginning a great degree of caution is necessary to use them properly; and the best means to attain dexterity, in the use of these weapons, is the following: if we exercise ourselves assiduously therein, even when there is no danger at hand, because we ought always to be ready, being fully armed. We ought, especially, to have the shield of faith, the sword of the Spirit: we must be engaged in prayer, in order to know how to use them dexterously, in time of need. When this is the case, we attain to an uncommon degree of dexterity; the soul becomes stronger and stronger. But when this exercise is neglected, then there will be danger; and, hence many a soul, at one time or other, is overcome, till rescued by the grace of God. However, this makes such an one more diligent and circumspect; and brings him to such a degree of strength, that ten thousand devils and a dozen of worlds cannot do him the least injury, without it be the will of God.

Second part: But where shall we seek the ground of all this? Whence this unusual strength? Is a man justified of himself before God? Are christians such lords over themselves; over every thing that is evil and sinful; such conquerors of satan, such conquerors of the world? No! Man of himself is nothing, even if advanced thus far in a state of grace. Of themselves, christians are poor, sinful and frail; and what they are, they are only by the grace of God. Therefore, true christians never boast of their righteousness and strength, as being immediately of themselves. But their glory consists much more in giving God and their Redeemer the glory, through the Holy Ghost; and the christian confesses candidly, not of me, not through me, nor by me, but in the "Lord have I righteousness and strength."

The word "LORD," is "JEHOVAH" in the original, and this is the name which the TRIUNE GOD ascribes to himself, as peculiar to himself. "I am the LORD, (JEHOVAH*) that is my name." Isa. lii. 8. The true meaning of which was made known to Moses, by God

* Jehovah in the Hebrew.

himself, when he commanded him, to say unto the children of Israel, "I AM THAT I AM; thus shalt thou say, I AM hath sent me unto you." This phraseology is intended to express the substance, or Being of God, and all his perfections and virtues, in particular; and that according to the eternal councils of peace, that he would manifest himself as God, to fallen man, manifest himself through his Son as the "Lord God merciful and gracious, long suffering and abundant in goodness and truth," as Moses acknowledges him, in calling on the Lord by this name. Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.

Here by the name JEHOVAH or LORD, we have particularly to understand the Son of God—Jesus Christ: because it is he who spake with Moses out of the burning bush; and said unto him, "I am the *Lord*, and I will bring you out from Egypt, I will redeem you with an outstretched arm; and ye shall know that I am the *Lord* your God." It is he, in whom, every perfection and virtue of God, are manifested; it is he, in whom all the promises of God are yea and amen to the penitent sinner, unto the glory of God. He is particularly represented under this name, according to his divinity, that is omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, and according to the union of his divine and human nature, as an all-sufficient, most perfect, holy, righteous, good, gracious, merciful, true and faithful Redeemer, who lacketh nothing, in whom all things are found to perfection, that are required for the true prosperity and perfect salvation of the needy sinner. In him the christian glories. "In him have I righteousness and strength." A believer that has received the assurance of the forgiveness of sins, by virtue of a living and saving faith, is united with Christ, which union becomes ultimately so close that he is wholly in him, ingrafted on him, as the branch is into the vine, so that he will deny himself, and every thing out of Christ; and strives to be found only in him, and to enjoy him, and to apply all his possessions, treasures and benefits, to himself. He finally becomes a member of his body, flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone. That soul will dwell in Jesus, and he in it. John, vi. 56. All that he has and possesses is derived alone from this

union with Jesus. In him, and in him alone, the soul has righteousness.

If we therefore consider the justification of the sinner, in the forgiveness of his sin, we have clearly shown, that it does not take place through his merits, or on account of the righteousness of the sinner, but by free grace, and only on account of the merits and righteousness of Christ; inasmuch as man is by nature corrupt and unrighteous. By Christ alone was that righteousness purchased for the sinner, with which he can stand before the bar of God. He fully satisfied the divine law. He suffered the penalty of sin, and quenched the burning wrath of God, by his blood and death. It is in him only the believing and penitent can obtain righteousness before God: "In whom they have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins." Eph. i, 7. "In him have they righteousness."

Not only have they the *righteousness* of *faith*, of *justification* and the *forgiveness* of *sin;* but, also, the righteousness of life, and are zealous in holiness. But even those who are converted and justified by faith in Jesus, have not of themselves the least disposition or ability, to do the will of God, and of their Redeemer. They have much more to confess that they are unclean, and that their righteousness is as filthy rags. Isa. lxviii, 6. It is Jesus only who communicates his spirit to them, who *qualifies* them, gives them *power* and *ability* to do the works required of such as enjoy the communion and favor of God, and who bring forth the fruits of righteousness of life and conduct. Yet the believer is encompassed by various wants and defects, infirmities and weaknesses; hence the necessity of his being careful to do all things in reliance on faith on the Lord Jesus Christ, through whose perfections all his wants and infirmities may be supplied. In this manner and in no other way, is the good which the believer accomplishes by the aid of the Spirit, imputed to him as righteousness before God. There is, therefore, a dangerous error into which we may readily fall, unless we have our eye continually upon it, and which may cost us many an awful conflict, before we are brought down in humility, and restored again to the commun-

ion and favour of God: I mean spiritual pride and presumption. Jesus manifests himself most graciously to such as sincerely surrender themselves unto him, for, should they do any thing without having a correct design in view, they are put in remembrance of it, so as to lead them to act in conformity with the will of God; so that they confess with Paul: "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Gal. ii. 20. "In the Lord have I not only righteousness but strength."

If it were to depend alone on the strength of man, the enemies of his salvation would readily conquer him: for, man of himself is entirely too weak to stand for a moment, much less to gain the victory. The experience of such as have recently enlisted under the banners of the Cross, teaches this emphatically. But what is impossible for man of himself, is made possible for him as being in Christ and Christ in him. From him alone he therefore derives power and strength, which is evinced by the christian in conquering himself, satan, the world and sin: he has his strength in Jesus: his language is, "He only is my rock and my salvation, he is my defence." Ps. lxii. 2. Without him, he is a weak and helpless creature; hence he has not always equal strength, if he does not continually adhere close to Jesus; so that something may take place to interrupt the sensible enjoyment of the divine favor, and thus teach him his weakness and the necessity of greater circumspection. Yet is he strong in the weak, though he may not at all times feel it alike sensibly. "He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength." Isa. xl. 29. In him the christian enjoys strength; nay, he is divinely strong, and able to conquer all things; to deny himself: to run in the way of the commandments of the Lord with joy. So strong is he, that the gates of hell cannot prevail against him: so that he can say with Paul, "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Rom. viii. 38, 39. Strong, that he "mounts up on wings as ea-

gles, he shall run and not be weary, and he shall walk and not faint." But "goes from strength to strength, until he appears in Zion before God." Ps. lxxxiv. 8.

APPLICATION.

Behold, this, my friends, is the glory of a true christian. He renounces himself, and gives God and his Redeemer the glory. His language is: "In the Lord, and only in him, have I righteousness and strength." If there be any present who have more profound knowledge of these matters, we wish them, with all our heart, God-speed. The longer you live, the further may you advance in this knowledge. But, let such at the same time, bear in mind, that all the important truths of the word of God, respecting experimental religion, cannot fully be brought into view, in the compass of one discourse; yea, that there is more experienced by the child of God, than can be expressed by words. We are persuaded, however, what we have spoken by divine assistance, although in much weakness, concerning the true glory of a christian, may tend to the edification of some present, to which may God grant his benediction, and to him be all the praise.

We have no doubts at all, however, as to the edification of those among you who have either just entered into a state of grace, or have already made progress in this state. But our chief concern is directed to this solemn fact, whether impressions have or may be made upon such of you, or are yet able to make any on those who are without Christ, and who know nothing of his righteousness—nothing of the righteousness of life, nor have any strength in him; but who are in your unrighteousness, powerful only in all manner of ungodliness. It is true we address you as a stranger, nevertheless we consider ourselves bound not to withhold, but to declare the whole truth to you, as it is in Christ Jesus. And, oh! that you might willingly and gladly receive it from us; and may we prove instrumental in leading some of you to serious reflection, that you might know and realize, on the one hand, the deplorable state of the carnal and unconverted; and, on the other hand, the felicity of true christians. We readily believe

that the state of the true christian must have recommended itself as happy in a high degree, to such of you as are not altogether insensible, that this rock of the christian is not like the foundation you are building on. But what does all this avail you, if you still remain ignorant of yourselves? What does it avail you, if you are as persons who dream of eating and drinking, but when they awake they find themselves hungry and thirsty? We therefore beseech you, from the sincere love we feel for your souls, seek the door of grace, while it yet stands open, and while it is called to day. Use the means of grace, by calling upon divine assistance; meditate upon and attend prayerfully to the word of God. Ask for the genuine eye-salve that the eyes of your understanding may be enlightened. Ask for penitential and believing hearts desirous of salvation. Ask for divine direction to seek Jesus—to hunger and thirst after him. Cry after him, until you obtain him and his perfect righteousness. Trust not to external exercises of religion, which are too frequently counted righteousness by the carnal minded, for these exercises of themselves, are as a broken reed, on which we cannot lean. But strive to win Christ, and be found in him. This righteousness, all that he is and has, is offered to you, and if you therefore, come unto him, by true repentance, and by a living faith, he will in no wise cast you out.

And what shall we say unto you in whom the Lord has commenced his good work, or who have already grown in grace? Permit us to address you by way of exhortation. Are you in the way of life? Have you commenced the work of your salvation? Are you yet in anguish and sorrow? Are you engaged in seeking your Saviour and Redeemer? Encourage one another; let not your courage fail you; be not intimidated; but remember that Jesus has become a Captain of Salvation through suffering. Remember that he is *Jehovah*, an omnipotent, all-sufficient, good, gracious, merciful, a true and faithful Saviour. He will not abandon his work in you. He has commenced it, and he will also finish it in spite of the devil and all his crew. Continue zealous in prayer, in wrestling and fighting, in seeking

the Redeemer: then you will surely find him, whom your soul loves, and obtain a true assurance of your salvation by faith in his blood.

Are you assured of this? have you made any progress in it, at one time or at another, but now feel yourselves weak? Examine yourselves and see what is wanting; examine yourselves and see whether you be in the faith. Perhaps something has transpired within you or without you, to provoke the Saviour to withdraw his gracious presence from you for a season, and thus to deprive you of this precious enjoyment. Encourage each other in spirit, and endeavour to remove these obstacles, and you will again become strong. Exercise yourselves diligently in the use of the armour of which Paul speaks, and prove yourselves valiant soldiers of Christ. Let your strength in him be invincible.

If you are strong in the Lord, in the power of his strength, glory not in it as if it were your own, but give your Saviour the honor, and walk humbly. Remember that Satan can easily invade you if you watch not, and remain not on the alert. Avail yourselves of your strength in the Lord, more and more, to conquer yourselves, Satan, the world, and every thing incompatible with a state of grace. Increase in faith, be more zealous in prayer, be firmly grounded in hope, walk more worthy of the gospel of Christ. Think not that you have already apprehended, but follow after, that you may so apprehend Christ as you are apprehended by him. Finally, those among you who enjoy an interest in Jesus, and are assured of his righteousness, be careful. I entreat you to manifest a becoming mind and spirit. Strive after true holiness and perfect righteousness of life. Show your strength in crucifying the remaining corruptions of your nature; in mortifying inordinate affections, and your carnal members. Endeavor to bring them more and more into subjection. Show your strength in fulfilling the holy will of God, in faithfully following the blessed Jesus, in all manner of holy conversation and conduct. Advance from virtue to virtue, "giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness,

and to godliness brotherly-kindness, and to brotherly-kindness charity." In short, "If there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." But do not these things as of yourselves, but in the name, and by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and then you will finally obtain the end of your faith, namely, the eternal salvation of your precious souls. *Amen.*

SERMON III.

ROMANS, CHAP. 4, V. 8.

"But God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were sinners Christ died for us."

INTRODUCTION.

"And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee in thy blood, live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, live." These, my friends, are the affecting words which the prophet Ezekiel was directed to declare, in the name of the Lord, unto the children of Israel. In the primary application of these words, they refer to the afflicted and miserable condition of the children of Israel, while in Egyptian bondage, as also the condescending love of God, by which they were delivered from it. But in a spiritual sense, these words represent the lost and undone condition in which all mankind are by nature, together with the free and unmerited mercies and grace of God, exhibited towards us, in Christ Jesus, the Son of his love, through whom he has granted us the forgiveness of sin, and bestowed on us life and salvation. "And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee, in thy blood, live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, live."

By nature, we all lay before God in the blood of our natural uncleanness, and hence are wholly and entirely evil, perverse, and depraved. "From the soul of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in us, but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores; which have not been closed, neither bound up, neither molli-

fied with ointment." Isa. i, 6. In this miserable, and deplorable condition we appeared to be quite forsaken and neglected, because our ruin was desperately great; our wounds were incurable; none could, by any means redeem his brother, or give God a ransom for him; to accomplish this even in a single instance would have required too much; and how much more to redeem a whole world? Hence, this would have consequently been deferred for ever: and we would have eternally perished.

But God, from whom we had departed, by our sins: from whom we had fallen—against whom we openly rebelled, and from whom we could not expect help, had compassion on us; he saw how awfully we were mangled by Satan—his, as well as our enemy; how terribly we were wounded; how impotent and helpless we lay in the blood of our natural uncleanness. He beheld us with the eye of pity, love and compassion, and said unto us, that we should live, yea, he said unto us when we were in our blood, that we should live. He gave us his beloved Son, Jesus Christ, by whom and he for whose sake, he is willing to be reconciled unto us, and redeem us from the depth of all our sins and miseries, and cleanse us from all manner of uncleanness; and acquit us of the guilt and punishment of our sins, and adopt us as his children, and make us heirs of eternal life. For Christ's sake we are to live unto God—we shall be rescued for ever, from spiritual and eternal death. For Christ's sake he has no pleasure in the spiritual and eternal death of the ungodly, but much more, that the sinner turn from his evil way, and live. That the sinner, by virtue of his grace, and by the assistance of his Spirit, by true repentance and faith, turn to Jesus, who came into the world for his sake, suffered and died on the cross that he might, for his sake, obtain life and salvation. God, in a word, will receive and accept every penitent and believing sinner, for Christ's sake. "Therefore, God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." That he gave his only beloved Son as an expiatory sacrifice for the guilt and punishment of our sins; while we lay in our natural depravity and un-

cleanness, and thus has shown himself merciful and gracious towards us. And how much more will he not shew himself merciful, when the believing and penitent sinner appears with Christ before him? These words, therefore, will afford us an acceptable and evangelical entertainment, and be very encouraging to us, by considering the following points:

DIVISION I. The truth of the death of Jesus Christ.

II. How God thereby commendeth his love toward us.

First part: What we are to understand properly concerning the truth of the death of Christ, and the manner of his dying. This truth is of such a nature, that it is known to all who profess, and not denied by any who confess the name of Christ. And this can be pretty extensively learned, by any one, in the Gospels. Hence, we shall only consider matters of more importance, and not detain you by relating a mere history of his death.

Christ died for us, and in our stead, to satisfy, by his death, the truth and justice of God, his heavenly Father. The justice of God required of us a complete satisfaction for sin—a full expiation; or that we should endure the guilt and punishment of sin for ever: because, the justice of God required that we who had transgressed his law, should be subject to death, temporal and eternal. God most positively threatened death to those who violate his most holy will. Gen. ii, 17. And he repeated this threatening in the most solemn language: "Cursed, viz: in time and for eternity, is he that keepeth not all the words of this law to do them." Deut. xxvii, 26. As a God of veracity who never spoke in vain, and who cannot lie, he must have necessarily fulfilled this threatening upon us, as his immutable justice required us to be punished with an eternal and infinite punishment. We could *never* have redeemed ourselves, because we could never have satisfied divine justice; for one sin, consequently, we should have been eternally subject to the punishment of sin.

But the Son of God, who pledged himself for us, before the world was in existence, for our sakes came into the world and became man, to satisfy the divine law, and bare, in his own body, the guilt and punishment of our sins, and finally died on the cross, by which he has fully satisfied the holiness and justice of God, for us. Now God requires no longer of the poor penitent sinner, who believes in Christ, and appears with him before the throne of grace, to suffer the punishment of sin, or, of himself, to render a perfect obedience to his holy law; because this has been done for him by his Surety and Mediator, by Christ Jesus; and is imputed to him by faith, for his justification before God. Hence Paul says: "Who will condemn me? It is Christ that died." Rom. viii, 34. And again he saith to those who think to become righteous before God by the works of the law: "For if the righteousness came by the law, then Christ died in vain." Gal. ii, 21.

Christ also died for us, to purchase grace and strength for us, in order that we might die unto sin and rise to a new life—to spiritual life, or to speak more plainly, Christ did, not only by his death, purchase salvation, but he also purchased the Holy Ghost, to lead us to repentance, and by faith, prayer and supplication, to take refuge in him. What would it have availed us, that Christ satisfied the justice of God, and made atonement for our sins: we were and are by nature, dead in trespasses and sin, utterly helpless—averse to all good, prone to every evil—blind, lame and insensible. We could not have been partakers of this purchased redemption; because the necessary means to it, were wanting, and we were ignorant of them. But Christ has purchased these means by his death; he purchased the grace to repent and to believe on him, and consequently, made us partakers of purchased redemption, by faith; it is thence that St. Paul says: "Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him." Rom. vi. 8. And our Redeemer himself saith, "And for their sakes I sanctify myself, (as an offering on the cross,) that they also, might be sanctified through the truth." John xvii. 17. We must now experience, by

repentence and faith in our own souls, what Christ has purchased for us, or it will avail us nothing. The redemption purchased by Christ, as to its sufficiency, is common to all; and the means of grace, faith and repentance, are common to all, if we do not neglect and despise them, and if we do not resist the Spirit of God.

Finally: Christ died for us, that we might, after having died with him, as to the old man, also enjoy with him a new life, through his Spirit. Therefore, saith Paul, "Knowing this, that the old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Rom. vi. 6. Therefore, we can do nothing good, even in a state of grace, except by the strength which we derive from Christ, and by his quickening Spirit, which he purchased for us by his death. We cannot live to the glory of God, before we receive this strength, and this quickening spirit. Neither can we grow and increase in grace, until we do it, through this strength, and by this spirit. This, however, is not obtained but by self-denial, by a complete surrendering of our soul to Jesus, by zealous, never-ceasing, cordial prayer and supplication before God, in secret. Then there will be no danger, but we will most assuredly obtain this grace for Christ's sake.

Thus, and for this purpose, Christ died for us, and Paul says, that was "while we were yet sinners." Paul had allusion to the state wherein he and the believing, whom he addressed were, namely, when in their natural and unregenerated state, "in which all are sinners, and come short of the glory of God." Rom. iii. 23. After conversion, we are still liable to sin, and through weakness we may sin; and to deny this, is but to deceive ourselves, "and the truth is not in us." However, there is still this difference:—before our conversion we are sinners, or as Paul expresses it, in the original, "We make sinning our calling," we sin knowingly, wilfully and resolutely, which cannot be said of a truly regenerated child of God; because, it is written, "Whosoever is born of God, *doth* not commit sin, for his (God's) seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." 1 John iii. 9.

By nature, and before genuine conversion, we do nothing, and can do nothing but sin, and indeed we sin wilfully, considerately, and with premeditation, and Paul says, that Christ died for us, while we were in this state. By this, we are to understand nothing less, than the free and unmerited grace and mercy of God, whereby he loved us in Christ. What could have induced the great God, to give his beloved Son unto death for us, and to bestow upon us, with him such riches, treasures and benefits? What merit, or what worthiness was in us? None other, than that we were detestable sinners, evil doers and transgressors, and deserving, by our sins, nothing less than the eternal wrath of God, and everlasting damnation. We could not, we cannot, and we shall never be able to contribute any thing; nay, the least, towards our redemption and reconciliation. We are only to approach, and let Jesus work in us; because he accomplished all things for us, even before we came unto him; even while we were yet in our sinful and naturally depraved state. Neither are we to look upon our sins, nor on the multitude of our henious transgressions; but we are to look upon Jesus, the destroyer of sin, who died for our sakes. We are to obtain salvation without merits, through the Lord Jesus Christ. And even as Christ died for us, while we were yet in a sinful, naturally depraved state, so we cannot become partakers of his purchased redemption, until we feel ourselves great sinners before God. True faith, whereby these blessings are bestowed upon us, and applied unto us, is not perfected in us, till we learn our nothingness; till we learn to know, that even the good that is in us, is condemnable. When we begin thus, to feel, then Jesus, with all his *merits* is not afar off, but is near at hand; nay, nearer than we frequently apprehend, even in the very act of imparting himself to us, with all his purchased grace and means of salvation. This is indeed *unmerited grace* and *mercy*—this is unspeakable love!

Second part: In this view, saith the apostle, that God commendeth his love to us. "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Can we conceive of a greater, or more unspeakable love, than this love of God, towards undone sinners, that he should give his only begotten Son for us, that we might live through him? Even herein God has manifested his inexpressible love, grace, and mercy, to the admiration and to the astonishment of all; to the joy and exultation of angels, and to the utmost dismay and consternation of devils, inasmuch as he gave his only begotten Son, to die for us. Nay, this unspeakable love of God, presses itself home to every reflecting soul, in such a powerful manner, that the most vile and ungodly sinner cannot but admire and reverence it. Moreover, God commendeth his love toward us, in that he gave his Son to die for us. Thus, he commendeth his love toward us, various ways, in relation to the merciful design which he had towards us, at all times, and ever will have even to the end of time.

"God commendeth his love towards us, that Christ died for us," by the acceptable, joyful and gracious invitations, by which he seeks to induce the sinner to become partaker of the enjoyment of this unspeakable love in Christ. This he does, in a twofold manner, externally, by his word, and internally, by the powerful operations and convictions of the Holy Ghost. The Old and New Testament, especially the *new*, contains many evidences of the love of God in Christ toward the needy sinner. The whole tenor of which is Christ crucified: the crucified love, by which the sinner can be supported and saved: and all this is commended in such pathetic and powerful language that it must be a heart like Pharoah's, not to be effected, at least in some degree by it. God more especially commendeth his love in Christ Jesus crucified, by the Holy Ghost, proffering to the sinner his Son, in such a manner, and with such unspeakable love, that the sinner cannot but be almost consumed by this fire of love, and be melted like wax. Nay,—such commendations of the unspeakable love of God in Christ Jesus, become strong in us, as we increase in grace, and frequently lay hold of the soul so powerfully, that the child of God, is so filled with the love of God, that he becomes sick, weak and faint with a fervent and holy love to God, when he

takes into contemplation what God has done for him in Christ Jesus. Blessed is he who suffers himself to be persuaded to embrace the love of God, by his Holy Spirit; and, after he is drawn by it, becomes willing to run the ways of his commandments.

"God commendeth his love toward us, that Christ died for us, while we were yet sinners," by an actual imparting, and a gracious application of what Jesus Christ purchased for us, by his suffering and death, especially in the forgiveness of sin, and in a full assurance through the Holy Ghost, of adoption, and of an inheritance of eternal life. God commendeth his love in Jesus Christ, in the highest degree, when he receives a soul into full fellowship with himself. Then we are conscious, that we feel the unspeakable love of God in Christ Jesus; yes, so sensible, and with so much power, are these commendations of the love of God connected, that it is impossible to express it; and this again kindles in the heart of the pardoned sinner, an ardent flame of the purest reciprocal love to God in Christ Jesus; so much so, that he begins to love God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his mind, and with all his strength; and his neighbor as himself, in Christ Jesus our Lord: and he is fully assured, "That neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate *him* from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Blessed state, in which few indeed find themselves, but which is prepared for all who sincerely desire it.

APPLICATION.

These my beloved friends, are truths into which, as they were yet mysterious, angels desired to look, but which are propounded to you with plainness, nay, which shall moreover be fulfilled, most strictly in you; if you are willing and desirous that God's will may be wrought in you. Jesus died for you on the cross. Jesus satisfied the truth, and justice of God for your sins. Jesus paid the debt for you; he purchased life and salvation for you. You can be fully assured, in Christ,

of the love of God, your heavenly Father. Nay, God looks with benignity and mercy upon you in the present hour, for Christ's sake. And he also sees *you*, who are yet in the blood of your natural uncleanness. His bowels yearn over you; he pities your deplorable condition, he has a fatherly compassion towards you; he is ready to help you; he will deliver and save you. To-day I call on every one of you in his name; ye shall live, hear it, oh, sinner, ye shall live and not die; because Jesus was crucified for your sins, offences, and transgressions. Could we bring you a more acceptable, a more joyful message? Oh, that you would duly appreciate and receive it! I have not the least doubt but that you willingly hear this proclamation, and are ready to apply it to yourselves; but I doubt whether you will do this in a proper manner. Of this I am fearful that you will deceive yourselves, in that you will apply this to yourselves without having a sufficient reason to do this, on scriptural grounds.

In nothing are we more apt and ready generally, than to apply the merits of Christ to ourselves, and to depend on the grace and mercy of God, without a just reason. Many an open, ungodly, flagitious drunkard and glutton, gambler, swearer, or calumniator, boasts that Christ died; that he atoned for the sins of the whole world; that God in Christ is gracious and merciful. On this he depends, and continues to sin, relying on the grace and mercy of God, and relying on the merits of Jesus, flattering himself if he can, in his last moments, but say, "God be merciful to me a poor sinner," that he will gain an admittance into heaven. Who say that a person cannot be so good as many persons say. Oh! wretched man! Oh, miserable sinner! I deplore your miserable condition; you err exceedingly; the devil has horribly deceived you. True, Christ died for all, consequently for *you* also, if you repent and be converted, but on no other condition. Do you believe that Christ is the servant of sin, that he purchased you the right of sinning, and withal, that you are to be saved for his sake. In vain, do you flatter yourself with this ungodly idea, in vain do you

depend on the merits of Christ, on heaven and eternal happiness; if you die not unto sin, by the virtue of the death of Jesus Christ. Christ has not only purchased by his death, the forgiveness of sin and eternal life, but also, the power and the ability to repent and to believe in him. Therefore, he that does not come unto him, and pray for this power, does not receive it, and has no interest in him. When death overtakes you, and your soul is required of you, then you will think otherwise: then you will denounce all such hope, and you will begin to wish that you had not suffered Satan, and your own wicked heart to have deceived you, and to see that your hope was all in vain.

Others are of opinion and think, because they are not guilty of gross crimes, that they must needs go to heaven for Christ's sake. If they have not an interest in Christ, who should have? These desire to be saved through their own righteousness; and they hold Christ and his righteousness in words only; they desire to know nothing of repentance and faith. They think persons as good as they are, have no necessity to be saved by the righteousness of Christ, applied by repentance and faith; that this only concerns notorious sinners. Deluded souls! Know ye, that Christ died *not* for such as you are. You have therefore no interest in him, and you are with all your imaginary riches, poor, wretched, blind, naked and undone; because you live without Christ in the world; and you are under condemnation; all is in vain that is not of faith in Christ, because it is sin. Why, then, say you, we will live as it may seem right *in our own sight?*—we will live as others, who enjoy the world. This you may do, at your own peril, if you desire to do so; but remember the awful end of such a course. What shall we then do? What shall we begin? What shall you do; what shall you begin? You must feel yourselves needy and helpless sinners, under the curse of God's law, and under condemnation; you must deny yourselves and seek Christ. Oh! but you will wish you had done so, when you are about making your exit from hence, into eternity; when death shall in reality appear before you in all his grim terrors!! But it is

unnecssary to defer it thus long. Ask your conciences; see whether they condemn you not, or at least, accuse you. How can there be forgiveness of sin through Christ, and you have eternal happiness, when there is yet an accusing conscience, which lays you under the sentence of condemnation?

Again, others acknowledge all this as true, and speak against it; are fully convinced, that they cannot be saved but alone through Christ, by repentance and faith in him; yet they hope, and hope continually, from day to day, that they, by the grace of God, will prepare themselves, but represent their secular callings, as of such a nature as to prevent them from attending to these things now; that they cannot do as others, who make a living much easier than they; and, that they have not education as others, to express themselves so fluently on this subject. Oh! wretched creatures, you are to be as much deplored as others; and your condition is not any better. It depends not on knowing much, or on mere worldly education, for this must at last, be laid down at the foot of the cross of Christ. What others have learned of Christ, you can also obtain from him, according to your necessities, and that you have not yet obtained this, is evident, from the fact, that Christ is made to *us all, wisdom*. How does your avocation hinder you from wrestling and struggling for Jesus? Will this excuse you in the great day? Think you, that others have it more easy, that have not so much to attend to in the world? No, you have it easier, because you are not subject to so many temptations as they are. How long will you defer to die with Christ, in order to live with him? Cannot death overtake you? And what then? Then you will be lost with all your convictions, and your hopes. Yet others have, by the grace of God, made a beginning to seek the merits of Christ, to feel themselves condemned sinners, under the curse of the law, to seek Christ, the fountain of life; but they scarcely make any progress; they cannot say, that they have obtained any thing real; they are not assured of the glorious fruits of the death of Christ; and if they enjoy any hope of this, it is not without much fear and anguish of heart. And

why is this so? Is Jesus such an austere man? Does he make the way so exceedingly difficult? Nay, you have never wrestled and striven with the Lord as Jacob of old: you have never been in earnest, or else you would never have neglected it, and the grace of God wanting thereto. You love the old man of sin too much; you have too much compassion on beloved old Adam, who is to be nailed so soon to the cross. There is too much of *self*, in you; you have other lovers, who will not suffer Jusus the bridegroom of your souls to enter; in short, you know yourselves in part, but not wholly as sinners. Perhaps you say, that you are not to make as great a progress as others, yet you hope to be saved: but Jesus answers, *no!* You can become partakers of him with all his merits: and whatever you may think of, or hope concerning your salvation, it is in vain. You must either have a complete Saviour, or none. The condition in which you persist, will serve no other purpose, than to make you more miserable in time, and for eternity. Perhaps you are ready to reply, that it is not time for you yet. With you it may seem so, but with God it is not so; with him there is no time; with him it is every day, *to-day*.

Will you soon yield? Will you give place to grace? Must you not confess that you are prisoners, that you cannot escape? Oh, yes, me thinks I hear each of your consciences speak. I perceive it by your countenances, that your hearts are touched. Will you say, *no?* Grace is working effectually in you. Surrender! Surrender! How long will this continue with many of you? Until you have left the house of God, then all will be obliterated, by your worldly conversation, or by something else, instead of abiding with your whole hearts, whither you were directed. I charge you my friends,—I adjure you by the crucified Saviour, that you do this not; but surrender instantly, to Jesus. What, will you do it? Do you feel this desire in your hearts? Do you feel a powerful inward drawing? Are you inwardly sensible thereof, and persuaded to do so? It is Jesus; Jesus the crucified! do you not feel how he knocks? Hear you not the gates of Gaza grate, as if they were lifting out of their hinges? Surrender

immediately the strong holds of your hearts; do it without delay. Lord Jesus give ear to the desires of such souls. Lord Jesus knock, knock yet more powerfully: now is the time, thou hast made many hearts willing. Lord Jesus, one call more,—another powerful drawing, and the work will be accomplished. Lord Jesus, another general assault, and the fortification will be surrendered to thee.

Immortal souls, the day, the hour of God's gracious visitation is at hand! This is the acceptable day for you, the day of salvation. Perhaps you will never live to see another. Death is perhaps waiting for one or the other of you, at the church-door. The day on which Christ was crucified, shall administer to your life, and his grace lead to your resurrection. The Father looks upon you with compassion: the Son is waiting for you, with open arms: the holy angels stand waiting to minister to you; the New Jerusalem, the church of the saints; stands with open portals for you. You shall live saith God, you shall live and not die. Away with Satan, for it appears to me, that he, at this moment, is persuading one or the other, of you, that he is too great a sinner. Away with unbelief, by which he is attempting to persuade you, that you are not concerned in this matter. No! you are not too great sinners for Jesus. It is for you he died; you are included. Cast yourselves immediately into the arms of Jesus' love. For he died for sinners. Lord Jesus, say Lord Jesus here am I—I believe, help my unbelief.

Hearken, take heed to your hearts, and attend to what is going on inwardly at the present moment. Do you not feel something unusual? Do you not feel a drawing not to be expressed by words? Does it not seem to you as though there were some one, within you, persuading you, unspeakably more powerful, than I can in my weakness, to come, unto Jesus? That is God, that is your Father, who is drawing you unto his Son. Whence you may know that I do not speak the mere words of man, but in the power of Jesus, my Master; as an ambassador therefore in Christ's stead, I pray you, follow the drawings of the Father, and be ye reconciled unto God through Christ Jesus his Son.

Who among you, acknowledges himself to be a great sinner? Who feels himself sensibly so? Who feels himself so, particularly since he trusts that he has received an assurance of the forgiveness of sin? Who feels himself weak? In whom does a struggle of the flesh against the spirit exist? Who among you is such a sinner? Oh, come into the presence of Jesus, he died for sinners; but of this you will not become fully assured, until you have felt yourself inwardly, a great sinner; nay, until you are sensible, even of the most subtile sin. Why are you cast down? Rather praise God, that you are in such a condition, and become silent; do nothing to suppress such emotions, by divine grace within you, and keep near to Jesus. This is a beginning with you, to assure you fully of the means of salvation, and to establish you in his grace. For none become true saints, unless they feel themselves great sinners, even after their first awakening. And how do you feel on this occasion? Do you feel your selves bowed down, and humbled; do you feel an inward reverential awe before God, a warm desire for a full espousal to Jesus, the mild, moving condescension of eternal love? And are you in the faith? Be then assured, from henceforth, that Jesus of a truth died for you; and that all is yours, that he has purchased; his spirit will assure you of this, he will grant you the privilege of adoption, and you will be enabled to sing praises to his holy name; to render to Jesus, who was crucified as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world, praise, and honor, and glory, now and for evermore. Amen.

SERMON IV.

MALACHI, CHAP. IV, V. 2.

"But unto you that fear my name, shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings."

INTRODUCTION.

"There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." This, my hearers is the language of God by the mouth of his servant the prophet. Isaiah, lvii. 21.

The foregoing part of this message, promises glorious comforts to those who are of an humble and contrite spirit, bowed down and alarmed on account of their load of sin; to those who anxiously desire help and consolation; to such are promised perfect peace and the blessed rest of the Messiah, who should deliver them from sin, justify and save them forever. But "the wicked have no peace, saith my God."

Those who practice every prevailing sin, who neither fear God, nor have any reverence for his word, but live in all manner of ungodliness; who reject the message of repentance and true faith in Christ, by which we obtain the grace of God, and true peace, have no peace,—no peace with God, no peace with their own consciences, no peace with themselves, and no peace with any other creature. By their sins, they are always at war with God, and any thing but reconciled to him. The consciousness of their wickedness, never suffers them to rest. Keen upbraidings, horrid representations, frequently make them feel most wretched; the rustling of a leaf, of a straw, or a spire of grass, is sufficient to terrify them; and not unfrequently brings a death-like fear upon them, and no where have they any rest. The reason of this is, because they do not

belong to the Prince of peace, to Jesus Christ; and, because they despise his dearly purchased peace, and the gifts of grace; consequently, they have no interest in them. "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked."

Although, "the grace of God," as Paul teaches, "that bringeth salvation, hath appeared unto all men:" Tit. ii. 11,—although the true Prince of peace, Jesus Christ, offers and proclaims his spiritual and heavenly peace unto all; yet we cannot become partakers of the grace of God, and the true peace of the soul, unless we comply with the terms of salvation; for those whom the Lord makes partakers of these spiritual and heavenly blessings, and whom he has chosen by free, unmerited grace; those he also brings to the means, whereby they may obtain the actual possession of those blessings. But whosoever is obstinate, and continues without shame, or fear, in impenitence and does not comply with the conditions of salvation, he can never become a partaker of the glorious, and blessed fruits of the incarnation of Jesus Christ, and of his purchased blessings, and benefits. The light of grace will never arise in his soul, but he shall perish in his sins, by the righteous judgment of God, and hasten to the eternal, dark abyss of hell. But, whosoever permits the all-powerful grace of God, to enter into his soul, whosoever fears God, and by his assistance submits himself on gospel terms, and conditions to Jesus, and walks in the way of repentance and faith, he shall enjoy every desired benefit of the incarnation of his Redeemer;—he shall obtain this spiritual and heavenly peace; he shall be justified, sanctified, glorified, and blessed. This is the glorious promise of the Lord by the prophet Malachi, in the words of the text: "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings."

The prophet represents the ungodly in the preceding verses, as declaring, by their own words, "It is vain to serve God, it profiteth nothing that we keep his ordinances, and that we walk mournfully before him. Therefore we call the proud happy, yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are

even delivered." But the prophet also testifies that it shall certainly be revealed, how great the difference shall be between the righteous and ungodly, between him who serves God, and him that serves him not. To the despisers and ungodly, he proclaims a horrible day; a day "That shall burn as an oven, that shall burn them as stubble, that shall leave them neither root nor branch." But to the devout he says: "But with you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings."

We propose therefore, showing from these words, in what the glorious benefits of the incarnation of Jesus Christ consists, and how we become partakers of them, in the economy of redemption, as an argument to submit believingly to God, on the terms and conditions of the gospel.

We will therefore, consider the following particulars:

DIVISION I. The persons spoken of; and,

II. The glorious promises given unto them.

First part.—Such as *fear* the *name* of *God*, are spoken of. We use names to distingush one person, or one thing from the other. God is the only God, and has not his equal either in heaven or on earth. Consequently, properly speaking, he has no name; hence, Solomon enquires, "Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? Who hath gathered the wind in his fist? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his Son's name, if thou canst tell." Prov. xxx. 4. But although God, is an incomprehensible being to us, especially since the fall of man, he still, in condescension to the blindness of the human understanding has made, such revelations of himself, as to enable us to form some idea of his being, so far at least, as is necessary to our salvation. God, has, therefore, been pleased to ascribe to himself certain names, thereby to represent and to express to man, his divine being, his perfections and virtues, so far as this knowledge is necessary to our salvation.

The name of God, therefore, denotes nothing less than God himself, his perfections, his virtues, his word, his ways and works; and, in general, all his divine attributes, by which he reveals himself, and is known among the children of men. Among which are, that he is eternal, almighty, omniscient, omnipresent, all sufficient, incomprehensible, most perfect, holy, good, righteous, merciful, and gracious, true, patient and long-suffering. He is JEHOVAH, God who is, who was, and will be what he is, who fulfils his promises most faithfully; but, who will also execute his threatenings most rigidly. Who of a truth is ELOHIM, a covenant God, reconciled unto the sinner in Christ Jesus, if he comes unto him, in the order of salvation, by repentance and faith. But, who is also a consuming fire and a jealous God, if we despise the day of grace, and continue to resist him, by continued impenitence: he, then, as the EL, ADONAI, SABAOTH, as a mighty God and omnipotent Lord, Lord of Hosts, will visit the sinner with the eternal torments of hell. Justly have we to fear the name of God, that is God, with all his perfections and attributes.

The fear of God with man, is properly speaking, such a disposition of mind, as will incline him to live and walk according to the will of God. The origin of this disposition of mind, is a correct knowledge of the name of God, that is of God himself, and of his attributes. For if we know him not, and if we are not instructed concerning him, that he can do us good, or evil, we shall not fear, nor shall we revere him. If we indeed, have a knowledge of the divine being, and have correct views of his attributes, yet remain slaves to sin, and only fear his power and positive justice; and dread him, on account of having committed sin: such fear, the scripture terms servile fear, which only compels a man to make an outward profession of religion. But it is not so with the true, and filial fear of God, which is spoken of here; but it is altogether of a different nature.

True, in this we know God, as a *holy* and *righteous* God, as a just and righteous judge, who threatens those who act contrary to his holy and immutable law,—who

is an eternal and everlasting God, who will assuredly execute his *denunciations*. Man knows that he has lived contrary to the will of God, in many respects, and therefore, has deserved, that God as a righteous and holy God, should deal with him according to his word and let his judgments and chastisements come upon him. This makes him not a little afraid, yea the whole world at times, seems too narrow for him. But in the mean time such an one knows, on the other hand, by the light of divine grace in his soul, that God as a good, gracious, and merciful God, will be reconciled unto him through Christ Jesus, that he will pardon all his guilt, and free him from the punishment of sin. This excites in him an unusual esteem, and ardent love toward God. Now his *sins* do not trouble him so much, as the reflection that he had provoked an Almighty, a holy and righteous God by them, and has justly deserved punishment, especially in having displeased such a good, gracious and merciful God. This awakens in the penitent sinner, such a sense of shame, that he is almost afraid to appear in his most holy presence. Yet necessity presses him, and he ventures—he attempts the bold step—he approaches the throne of grace with filial fear, and prays humbly for the forgiveness, for the discharge of this guilt, and freedom from the punishment of sin. He takes his refuge in Christ, and sues for the garment of his spotless righteousness, and pleads for protection, succour, and help in his distress.

This filial fear in the mean-time, incites him to regulate his life and conduct, by the grace of God, as much as possible, according to his will, till Christ fully manifests himself in him. He hates sin, he shuns and flees from it, not so much on account of the fear of punishment, as out of love toward God, because God is thereby displeased and provoked, and his own heart polluted. Such a man would not for all the riches of this world, knowingly; and wilfully, do any thing contrary to the known will of God; for it is written: "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" Gen. xxxix. 6. This filial fear of God, is an essential part, of true repentance, and conversion, and increases within the

believer, according to his progress in sanctification. Blessed are they in whom this fear is wrought by the condescending grace of God; to them is the glorious promise made.

Second part.—"To you who fear my name, shall the sun of righteousness arise." By this *sun* we are to understand none other than the Son of God, the Lord Messiah, Jesus Christ, who is represented under the figure of the visible sun, on account of his excellent operations, which his believing and chosen followers participate of, spiritually. Even as the natural sun dispels the darkness of the night, enlightens, warms, quickens and makes fruitful; (and to us, there is but *one sun* that communicates the cheering light of day to our globe;) so there is but "one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." 1 Tim. ii. 5. "For other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus." 1 Cor. iii. 11. "Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we may be saved." Acts iv. 12. "He is the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." It is he who warmeth and quickeneth the hearts of believers, that they may abound in good works. He is also in particular, the sun of righteousness." By him there was an end made of sin, reconciliation was made for iniquity, and he also brought in an everlasting righteousness; such a righteousness, with which the helpless sinner, can stand in the judgment of God, and by which he can be acquitted of all guilt and punishment due to his sins. For "God set his son forth, to be a propitiation, through faith, in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." Rom. iii. 25. Jesus Christ is a "sun of righteousness, with healings in his wings." What the rays of the natural sun are to the body, such are the rays of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the sun of righteousness, in a spiritual view to the soul. He is the true horn of salvation, through him believers become partakers of that which tends to life, and what is necessary to a godly walk and conversation. With him they find protection from every enemy of their salva-

tion, and he heals them of all the stripes, and wounds, and putrifying sores of the soul. Therefore, he has an appropriate name, "THE SAVIOUR," who redeems his children, from the power of Satan, from the fear of death, and eternal damnation, and makes them happy eternally. As such he has arisen, as such he appeared in his gracious birth and incarnation, when he was born as a *true man*, of his mother, the Virgin Mary. "For as much then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself, likewise, took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that has the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death, were all their life-time, subject to bondage." Heb. ii. 14, 15. Believers under the old testament, rejoiced, in this spiritual sun of righteousness, and were enlightened by the rays of his grace, were justified from sin, and made partakers of salvation and eternal happiness. But that dispensation was much obscured by the veil of Moses, and was hidden behind the shadow of the ceremonial law,—the divers offerings, washings, and sprinklings, and purifications. Old Testament believers, anticipated their salvation as yet to be purchased. But in the incarnation, and birth of our blessed Redeemer, the night of the shadows of the old Testament, was fully dispelled, and the spiritual sun of righteousness appeared in full splendor. Then was it emphatically said, "Through the tender mercies of our Lord, whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited us." Luke vii. 78. "Because he hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light." 2 Tim. i. 10.

Thus Christ, the Sun of righteousness has arisen," especially in his birth and incarnation. But this still comes to pass spiritually, in souls that are converted from darkness to the light, from the slavery of Satan, to the service of God, in souls, as the text says, "that fear the name of God." Then Jesus bids the light come forth out of darkness. Then he becomes as a prophet, wisdom unto man, and enlightens his understanding, and leads him to a saving knowledge of God and himself. He then fills the soul with such heavenly and divine light, that it is constrained to exclaim with

Paul, "Lord what wilt thou have me to do?" *Act.* ix. 6. When a man follows this divine light,—when he is led to a true fear of God, to a saving knowledge of God, and himself in Christ, when he humbles himself before God and his Redeemer, and truly repents: then Christ arises in his soul; as

"The Sun of righteousness," then he bestows him, the government of salvation, and the robe of perfect righteousness. Then he applies to him his precious and perfect merit, by a true and living faith; and reconciles him to his heavenly Father, as a high Priest, through the offering up of his body. Then the sinner is acquitted of the consciousness of guilt and freed from deserved punishment, at the bar of God, on account of the righteousness of Christ. Then he receives the soul-cheering language, "Son be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee." Matt. ix. 2. Then the sinner is "justified freely, by God's grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Rom. iii. 24. And in as much as the righteousness of faith requires also a righteousness of life, those who are justified, must bring forth, in their life and conduct the fruits of righteousness; hence Jesus arises in the soul as the "Sun of righteousness"—he quickens the heart in love to God, and towards men, and makes it fruitful in every good word and work, that their light may so shine before men, that they may see their good works, and glorify their Father in heaven." And that denying all "ungodliness and worldly lusts, they may live soberly, righteous and godly in this present world." Tit. ii. 12. "And that the new man may be put on, which after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness." Eph. iv. 24. And thus the soul finds healing in the wings of the spiritual *Sun of Righteousness*. For the longer a soul is with Christ, and he with it, the more will it be quickened and made fruitful. Here Jesus consumes and eradicates from the soul, the sink of sin. He washes it from the filth and uncleanness of sin, by the daily renewing and sanctifying influences of his Spirit. He dispels from it every arising mist and fog of unclean desires and propensities. He delivers the soul from all dominion of sin and makes it Lord over it. He de-

fends and protects it from every temptation of Satan, of the world and of sin, and bestows upon it the earnest of the Holy Ghost, "that beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Should even temptations and tribulations arise; God says to such: "Fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art in me; when thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not over-flow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord, thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour." Isa. xliii. 1, 2, 3.

Should they, through error or infirmity, depart from the right way, and defile the garments of salvation which they have received, he will bring them back, and they shall come with him again; thus shall they find anew, healing in his wings, and be more closely united to him than ever, so that neither "death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any creature shall be able to separate *them* from the love of God, which is in Jesus Christ *their* Lord." Romans viii. 38, 39. Until he makes them finally partakers of eternal salvation, and happiness in heaven, it may justly be said: "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." He shall say unto the Lord: "He is my refuge and my fortress; my God—in him will I trust; because he shall deliver *me* from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust. With long life he will satisfy *thee* and show *thee his* salvation." Psalms, 91.

APPLICATION.

Behold! these are the glorious fruits of the incarnation of the Son of God, and thus are we made partakers of this grace according to the plan of salvation. Thus the Sun of Righteousness arises to those who fear God, and they obtain healing in his wings. It will not suffice

historically, however, for us to know that Jesus Christ was born, a true man, according to the will of God, of an immaculate virgin, if we desire to become partakers of the benefits of his incarnation. But it is also required of us that Christ be formed in our hearts, and that he arises in us, as the Sun of Righteousness, if we desire to find salvation in his wings. But Christ is only born in the hearts of such as submit with their whole hearts to him, and seek his salvation; and the fruits of his incarnation pertain only to those who fear God—to the penitent and believing. For Christ is not a servant of sin, he did not come to grant us the privilege to sin, and thereby to promote the kingdom of Satan; but, the Son of God was manifested "that he might destroy the works of the Devil." He appeared, "That, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteous and godly, in this present world." Titus ii. 12. Therefore, he that lives impenitently, and in ungodliness, who serves *Satan*—the *world* and the *lusts thereof*, and *his own* sinful *desires*, has no hope of an interest in the fruits of the incarnation of Jesus Christ. "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked. They have no interest in the blessings of salvation and grace, to purchase which, the Prince of Peace came into the world; and which are the only blessings which can afford true peace to the soul.

We celebrate this *day*, in remembrance of the incarnation and birth of our Immanuel.* Brethren, consider what a great, what an inexpressibly great blessing this is,—only think if Jesus had not appeared in the world, what would have become of you! Who would have dispersed the dark night and shadows of death?—Who would have delivered you out of the kingdom of Satan and of darkness, if the Sun of Righteousness had not arisen? Who would have purchased you such a righteousness with which you can stand in the judgment before God, if God had not sent his Son into the world to save sinners? Whither would you have looked for salvation, if that heavenly message had not been heard: "Behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy,

* The author preached this sermon on the 25th December, Christmas day.

which shall be to all people; for unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord." Therefore, immediately ponder within yourselves on this great subject, and examine how you have appreciated this great blessing, and in how far you have earnestly desired to become partakers of it. Say, is Christ formed in you the hope of glory? Has this spiritual Sun arisen in you? Have you been enlightened by him, and made wise unto salvation? Have you a saving knowledge of God and yourselves? Have you followed this Divine light in the way of true repentance? And can you say that he has arisen in you as the Sun of Righteousness? Are you assured of the righteousness of Christ; and, that you have for his sake obtained grace from God, and the remission of sins? Have your hearts been quickened, prepared and made fruitful in righteousness? Do you show forth in your lives that *your salvation* is in the "wings of the Sun of Righteousness?"

How pleasing would it be to me, and how gladly would I, instead of putting these questions, bear testimony that you are really such as have experienced these blessings! But since your own conscience refuses you this testimony, how much less can I do this without being unfaithful towards you? For must not you yourselves confess that the majority of you are yet in the kingdom of darkness; and that you practice the works of darkness; that your understanding is benighted; that no light of a saving knowledge has arisen in you, so as to induce you sincerely to repent of your sins! Must not the greater part of you confess that you have not been made righteous through Christ, because you live in sin and ungodliness—that you have found no healing in his wings; because there is no "soundness in you, from the sole of the foot, even unto the crown of the head; but wounds, and bruises and putrifying sores, because you suffer sin to reign in your mortal bodies, and obey it in the lusts thereof."

Is it not surprising that there are so few among you, that can comfort themselves with the fruits of the incarnation of the Son of God? No wonder! Oh no! Because the greater part of you, reject the terms of salva-

tion, together with the invitations of grace—you do not fear God—you have no reverence for his majesty. You do not bear in mind that he is a holy and just God who will punish sin eternally in hell. Nay, many of you have not even a servile fear of God, especially among the young, and hence, all kind of vices are committed by such without dread; so that often in the night, the sin of your youth cry aloud to heaven! "If then I be a father, where is mine honor? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the Lord of Hosts."

Do you imagine that I can comfort you, with the benefits of the incarnation of Christ, as long as you are in such a state? No! never! You must be converted! You must first set, with Mary at the feet of Jesus, and there learn his doctrine. You must beseech God that he would make him wisdom unto you; that the eyes of your understanding may be enlightened, in order to know God and yourselves. You must fear God, and shun whatever is displeasing to him. You must fear him, not so much on account of the punishment, which he has threatened as the reward of sin, as out of respect and love for his character. You must humble yourselves, in his sight, by true penitence, and pray to him for grace, and for the forgiveness of your sins. You must come in faith, unto Jesus, and ask him for the benefits of his incarnaton, that he may arise unto you, as "the Sun of Righteousness, with healing in his wings." But we ask others among you—Brethren, has the Sun of Righteousness arisen in you? Have you found healing in his wings? If you have, then praise God above all, for his grace and mercy manifested to-you-ward—and let his praise be spread abroad. Strive to walk by the rays of the Sun of Righteousness; and be zealous in righteousness of life. Studiously avoid the unfruitful works of darkness, and walk as the children of light. Follow after holiness with zeal, and suffer not sin to have dominion over you. Submit yourselves more and more to the Sun of Righteousness, that you may be more quickened in love toward God and toward your neighbor, and that you may abound more and more in good works. Walk in filial fear before God, and sin not pre-

sumptuously against him. Are you in tribulation—are you tempted—take refuge under the wings of the Sun of Righteousness, and then will Jesus protect and defend you, and if you continue faithful until *death*, he will give you a *crown of* LIFE. AMEN.

SERMON V.

TITUS, CHAP. II. V. 11, 12.

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts; we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.

INTRODUCTION.

Nothing is less conformable, to true christianity; nothing is more contrary to its principles, than an unchristian, unholy, and dissolute life. Every thing speaks in testimony of this truth. If we consider the author, and founder of the christian religion; we do not only hear the most glorious doctrines from his lips, but we see them also practised in his holy walk and set forth unto us an example for our immitation. His design is to make man free, virtuous and happy; free by his obedience, suffering and death, and virtuous, and happy, by closely observing and practising his holy doctrines. For the principles of true virtue, which Jesus taught, make both happy here and hereafter. His maxims are generally of such a holy nature, that there is nothing more contrary to them, than the ungodly and unholy doctrines and works of Satan, the world and the flesh. What concord has Christ with Belial? What communion hath light with darkness? What fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness? NONE! These are things opposed to each other in their very natures, and cannot by any means be united. An unholy and an ungodly life and deportment are an evidence, of an infidel: and he that serves Satan, the word and sin, is none of Christ's—has no lot nor interest in him, or in the benefits of his incarnation. It is an evi-

dence that he has not yet become a partaker of the grace of God,—that he has not yet given it place in his soul, that he yet lies in the deplorable state of nature. For the grace of God through which he has mercy on the helpless sinner, and by which he bestows him Christ, to the salvation of his soul, this grace will not suffer a man to remain in this deplorable state, but it plucks him out of it, making him virtuous and happy, and a faithful observer of the doctrine of Christ, and a zealous follower of his foot-steps. This is the design why the Son of God, was manifested in the flesh, and assumed human nature; namely, not only to redeem man from the power of Satan, from the curse of the law, and eternal death; but, also to purchase to himself a people, zealous of good works; a people that will observe every duty, according to his holy doctrine, toward God, toward ourselves, and toward our fellow men; renouncing with all the heart, what is contrary to the holy will of God. This is what Paul teaches in the words of the text.

Contents.—Here he sets forth the true design of the incarnation of the Son of God, and the duties of christianity and he urges the most rigid observance of them.

We shall therefore, consider the text in the following order:

Division I. The truth of the incarnation of the Son of God.

II. The design thereof.

First part.—The truth of the incarnation of the Son of God is asserted in the words, "The grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men.

By the grace of God, we have to understand the eternal love of God, whereby he has resolved to receive the helpless sinner in his misery, to rescue him from it, and to make him eternally happy. For since man through sin has cast himself into an abyss of misery, and incurred present, and everlasting punishment, in consequence of transgressing the divine law, and could never have extricated himself from it, but

must inevitably have been given over, to perdition, God therefore, who foresaw the fall of man, did already in eternity, in compassion and love, devise means whereby fallen man might be redeemed from his misery, from all the guilt and punishment of sin, and be made righteous, holy, and happy, in perfect consistency with his holiness and righteousness. And he resolved to manifest this his gracious love toward the sinner, in his own beloved Son, who as the blessed seed of the woman, should appear in the fulness of time, in the flesh and through perfect obedience, through suffering, shedding of his blood and death should emancipate the helpless sinner from the service and dominion of sin, from the fear of death and eternal damnation; and prepare him for the fellowship of God, and make him meet for eternal happiness. Jesus Christ the Son of God, is also to be understood by the term, "*the grace of God*," because he is the means thereof. "For he is the sure mercies, (grace,) of David." Isa. lv. 3. And God hath set him forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." Rom. iii. 25.

This great and unspeakable love of God toward fallen, sinful man is properly called a GRACE. For God suffers man to enjoy it, not out of any merit, and worthiness of his own; for man is altogether unworthy of it. Therefore it is said, "Being justified freely, by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Rom. iii. 24. And, "By grace we are saved." Eph. ii. 5. If man had continued in a state of innocence, he could have enjoyed, as is easily supposed, with all his posterity *the grace of God*, in innumerable benefits. But as man then could not have been, in the highest degree miserable, and unworthy of God's mercy, the love of God toward him, could not have been considered such a compassionate grace: because man could have made himself acceptable, by a close observance of the law of God. But since God manifests his love to man, who had fallen from him, who provoked him to anger, and who were in the deepest ruin, and wholly unworthy of it; therefore, this grace,

is properly called a compassionate and unmerited grace, which God bestows upon the sinner contrary to his merits.

With propriety it is therefore called *"the grace that bringeth salvation,"* because through this a great salvation is bestowed upon the sinner, which he cannot sufficiently admire, and contemplate. Thereby he is not only rescued from the miserable condition in which sin has placed him, but he is also made meet for the fellowship of God, the chief good, and made a partaker of happiness. And since Christ himself is understood by this grace, so the Holy Scripture teaches us fully, that it is the only "grace that bringeth salvation." For other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus." 1 Cor. iii. 11. "Neither is there salvation in any other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts iv. 12.

This grace that bringeth salvation, as is further said, *has appeared to all men.* Not as if all men were saved by this grace. This is contrary to the word of God and experience. But all may be saved by this grace, if they would avail themselves of it by assistance from on high, and if they would not resist the Holy Spirit, and thus wilfully deprive themselves of it, and plunge themselves into everlasting ruin. The universality of this grace appears, mereover, because it extends to every class of people, to Jews and to Gentiles; to every nation, kindred, and tongue, whom God from all eternity appointed unto it, and by virtue of this, seek it in the order of salvation, and are actually, thereby saved.

This grace that bringeth salvation, God made known immediately, after the deplorable fall; in the first promise of the blessed seed of the woman, and invited the whole human family to it. This was done during all the time of the promises, in the Old Testament, and prefigured in diverse manners, and believers were actually saved through this grace; but it was grace yet to be purchased. Hence our text speaks of a time in which it actually appeared.

This took place in the beginning of the New Testament, when Jesus Christ, the Sun of righteousness,

appeared, "who abolished death, and brought life, and immortality to light." When the Saviour was born in the city of David. When he came into the world to save sinners. Then it was said, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." Isa. lx. 1. This is the design of the "grace of God, that bringeth salvation; it is the design of the incarnation and the appearance of Jesus Christ in the flesh, that we might become light in the Lord, and walk in the light; that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness, all the days of our life. Hence the grace of God that bringeth salvation is spoken of, as,

Second part—"Teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, and godly, in this present world." First, that it teaches us, or according to the original word, *that it may* instruct and direct us. This expression, is taken from a correct and perfect education of youth, who are instructed in relation to their ignorance and depravity, and directed into a better way. If youth have no desire to receive information of these things, they must be encouraged, and if they do evil, they must be chastised. So it is, in spiritual things. "For the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. ii. 14. "Because having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart." Eph. iv. 18. His will is unholy and depraved, and "every imagination of the thoughts of the heart is only evil, continually." Now, in order to be redeemed from this evil, and become otherwise minded, God's saving grace must arrest him, and he must be brought under the teaching of the Holy Ghost. Here the soul must take its seat with Mary, at the feet of Jesus, who is the wisdom of God, and is to be taught, and instructed in the way of salvation. Here Christ is made wisdom unto it, of God. He enlightens the understanding in those things necessary to be known, believed and

practised: he convinces powerfully and sensibly of sin, and implants in the will, an ardent inclination to perform that which is spiritually good. And if the sinner continues in this school of heavenly wisdom, and is conducted through it, then every necessary and suitable power is bestowed upon the soul, in regeneration and in the renewing of the Holy Ghost, through saving grace, to love, to seek after, and actually to perform, the things it discovers by the light of God, to be well pleasing unto him. True, there is not such speed made in receiving this instruction, but that the soul should be occasionally encouraged, and even sometimes be chastised on account of lukewarmness and indifference. Nevertheless, the grace that bringeth salvation is not frustrated in its design; but man, under its influence, is ultimately enabled to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. *Ungodliness* comprehends here the whole state of reigning sin, every thing contrary to the holy WORD and *will* of God; every thing that is inconsistent with, and contrary to the duties of true christianity, and the infallible doctrines of the Lord Jesus Christ. Nay, not only every *gross sin*, but also the very *root* of sin; every *rising* sinful lust and *desire;* every thing that *allures* us, and gives *occasion* to sin.

Worldly lusts comprehend such things as the world considers neither good nor evil; yet in truth belong to ungodliness, and are frequently connected with gross sins, or give occasion to them. Such as dancing, frollicking and playing, and the like, all which are called worldly lusts, because they are of the world and make men worldly-minded. "And the world and the lusts thereof, shall pass away." 1 John ii. 16. And consequently illy become a true christian, because he is taught by the grace of God to deny them.

Denying.—This is as much as to say, to lay them off, practise them no longer, nor to have any relish for them. For it is in this, that God's saving grace is manifested. This is what a penitent soul, that has been instructed in the school of Christ, must do. Here we must hate, shun and flee all sin and ungodliness. Here we must *renounce every sin, without exception*, not only gross and notorious sins, but even those less visi-

ble, nay, all sinful lusts, and desires. Here we must endeavor to destroy the root of sin, and deprive it of its very nutrition and vitality. If a desire to sin arises in the heart, we must suppress it: if an opportunity presents itself, from without, to tempt us to sin, we must flee it. We must not consider things indifferent, which the world considers as such; we must renounce the lusts of the world, all such as are not consistent with the religion of Christ. For as long as we take pleasure in those things, so long we are not sincere in our love of true godliness; and we have not yet been rightly instructed in the school of the blessed Jesus.—Now, we must be taught and instructed concerning the grace that bringeth salvation, and must deny ungodliness. The Holy Spirit exhorts to this most earnestly: "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do well." Isa. i. 16. "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in the lusts thereof; neither yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin." Rom. vi. 12, 13. "As obedient children not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance." 1 Peter i. 14." And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." Rom. xii. 2. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." John ii. 15.

But the teaching of the grace that bringeth salvation, does not stop here. It is not alone this that we learn in the school of our Lord Jesus, who is *the heavenly wisdom;* but as this grace brings man, on the one hand, from his wickedness, from ungodliness and worldly lusts, so, on the other, it implants in him an incitement, and inclines his will effectually to do good, to comply with the holy doctrines and principles of true religion, affording him strength to live "soberly, righteously and godly in this present world."

Soberly.—This relates to man himself, and requires of him, to be in all things sober, discreet and circumspect, and to know how to keep within proper bounds, neither doing too much, nor lacking any thing. These things must be carefully observed by a true christian,

whom "the grace that bringeth salvation" has taught. All this requires a due share of circumspection, lest there be too much done in eating and drinking, in sleeping and dressing, and the like. In these the christian must be temperate and sober, yet not so, as to withhold the necessaries of the body, or like the *Pharisees distinguished* from others by the *dress*, and a *singular deportment;* but he is not to abuse the gifts of God, nor is he to show himself vain. A christian must also be temperate and moderate in speaking; and in every other undertaking, "that no corrupt communication may proceed out of his mouth but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers." Eph. iv. 29. Thus he must likewise be sober and watchful, that no sinful thought may be rooted within him, but think of those things that are lawful; he must especially have an eye on all those things so that, "Whether he eats or drinks, or whatsoever he does, that he does it, all to the glory of God." Hence it follows, also, that he must live

Righteously.—This regards the nature and manner according to which a christian must conduct himself toward his fellow-men, and in this, the grace that bringeth salvation, teaches him. For in the school of heavenly wisdom, we do not learn to despise our neighbor, to esteem ourselves holier than he, or to live in hatred, envy, contention and enmity; to speak evil of him, or to take advantage of him in dealing. But a christian must live in unity with his neighbors, and carefully refrain from all strife and disputing, and shun it; he must be sincere, candid and honest, toward all men, abstain from slandering and cavilling, and as much as possible show himself affable and agreeable to all. Should he even meet with such as are yet christless and graceless, he must not despise them, nor esteem himself above them, but much more have compassion on them, and seek to lead such to the Lord. He must generally observe the rule of Christ: "All things whatsoever he would that men should do to him, he should do even so to them." Matt. vii. 12. Finally, the grace that bringeth salvation teaches man to live

Godly.—This particularly relates to the worship of

God, which the christian renders him by this grace, that bringeth salvation. He must not be satisfied with externals, but must worship God in spirit. John iv. 24. The external service must not be neglected, as Paul well remarks, but must be attended to, as much as possible, so that minor considerations, must never keep us from it. The christian must be engaged in it with all his heart; be fervent in prayer; and, when he praises God, "he must sing and make melody in his heart to the Lord." Be attentive to the preaching of the word of God. He must attend with a Lydia "to things that are spoken." Acts xvi. 14. And show himself attentive and respectful in behaviour. He must never neglect the inward service, but at all times lift up holy hands to God, and pray without ceasing, have God always before him, and "present his body a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God." Thus he must live in this world by the grace that bringeth salvation.

In the world.—In the midst of the perverse children of this world, he must let his light shine, and not be intimidated, but perform his duties. A christian must not be timid, or be discouraged by the aspersions and mockings of the children of this world, but go on cheerfully in the name of the Lord. Yet as a true christian he ought at all times to act with becoming prudence and circumspection, bearing in mind what Jesus saith: "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father who is in heaven; but whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven." Matt. x. 32, 33. "And he must let his light so shine before men, that they may see his good works and glorify the father who is in heaven."

APPLICATION.

Behold this is the design of the incarnation of the Son of God, and this takes place in man when he is permitted to accomplish this design, and these are the duties of true christianity which he is to observe in his life and deportment. The manifested *grace*, that bringeth salvation teaches him to deny all ungodliness

and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. In this, God manifests his grace in redeeming him from the abyss of perdition that he may afterwards by his power walk in light and in the communion of God, and be happy here and hereafter. For this purpose, Christ came into the world and redeemed him from the bonds of Satan, from the fear of death, and eternal damnation, that he might afterwards by his instruction and directions, live no longer according to the will of Satan, or unto sin; but on the contrary, comply with his holy doctrines and principles of his kingdom, to practice them, and be finally admitted into the mansions of everlasting bliss. There is nothing more contrary to his will, and more inconsistent, with a hope of heaven, than an ungodly life, and to live according to the lusts of this world. Nay, the mind and Spirit of Christ is required: we must deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously, and godly, or else we bear the name of christian in vain; and we are no better than the blind heathen, who knows nothing of Christ; nay, we are worse, and more wretched and more condemnable. We must show forth the fruits of vital christianity, and be assiduously engaged in it, or we cannot possibly comfort ourselves with the grace, that bringeth salvation, and the benefits of the incarnation of Jesus Christ, and of eternal life.

And how is it with you? Are you such christians? Do you answer the design of the incarnation of Christ? Has the grace that bringeth salvation, appeared to you? Has *it*, has *Jesus* instructed you in the school of wisdom? Has he inclined your will to do good; and enabled you, not only to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, but also to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this world? And do you really do so?

It will not be necessary for me to show the contrary: because experience speaks and declares too much of the sad decline of christianity, of the wide spread ruin, not to be noticed, abounding every where! And your own consciences accuse you of this, as they tell you in language not to be misunderstood, that many of you are not true, but only nominal christians. Now do but

consider the wretched situation in which you are, you who have hitherto withstood the grace of God. You have no part or interest in the incarnation of Jesus Christ; and you are without God, and without Jesus in the world, without light, comfort and life in time, and if you abide so till death, you must remain so to all eternity. Flatter not yourselves that Christ came into the world and suffered for sinners, and has rendered satisfaction to divine justice, by pouring forth his life's blood. This will not profit you any thing if you do not yield to the teaching of *that grace*, that bringeth salvation; and if you repent not truly, and live soberly, righteously and godly in this world. Therefore, arise and resist not the knockings of the Lord any longer, at the door of your heart. Learn the blindness of your minds, and the obstinacy of your wills! Look well to your wretched condition! Renounce your sins,—come and bow before the Lord, who is merciful. Come, come with the resolution to begin a new life, and to live unto him who came into the world for you, then the grace that bringeth salvation will teach you, and point out the way in which you are to walk. Instructed by this grace, you will be enabled to prove yourselves christians, you will be enabled to "deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. Then you will enjoy a true interest in the appearance of the Son of God in the flesh; and through his Spirit be made righteous and happy, both in time and for eternity, which may God grant for Jesus' sake! AMEN.

SERMON VI.

ROMANS, CHAP. VI, V. 11.

Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin.

INTRODUCTION.

All that the Son of God, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ did, and suffered, was not done for his sake, but altogether for the sake of us. "He suffered for our sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God." 1 Pet. iii. 18. For God hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." 2 Cor. v. 12. The apostle speaks particularly of his death, in the context, that he died unto sin. By his death, Christ rendered satisfaction for our sins, suffered the guilt and punishment of sin, and made it possible for us to be redeemed from the dominion of sin; and, that we might attain to life and salvation, by virtue of true repentance, and a living faith. "That Christ died he died unto sin." From this we may derive indescribable benefits, comforts and blessings. For, if Christ had not died, satisfaction could never have been made for our sins, and we should have never been redeemed from the power and dominion of sin, but would forever, have been servants of sin, and as such have suffered its deserved punishment. But by the death of the Son of God, this great evil was stayed and a perfect means purchased and provided, through which we may be saved. "For that he died, he died unto sin."

But, if we are to derive any benefit, comfort and gain, from the death of Jesus Christ; we must necessarily become, like unto the Lord Jesus, in his death.

For has Christ died, he "died unto sin," to deliver us from its guilt and dominion, so that the power of his death, must also manifest itself in us, if we would derive lasting benefits from it. We must, by virtue of the death of Christ, by means of true repentance and conversion, die unto sin, unto every sinful lust and desire, unto every work of Satan, and uncleanness; seek to free ourselves from the power, and dominion thereof; and have dominion over them; so that nothing knowingly, and wilfully may be committed, by which we might have the least appearance of serving sin. This affords the surest and most infallible evidence, by which we may judge, whether we have reason to comfort ourselves with the benefits and fruits of the death of Jesus Christ; or are yet destitute of a saving interest in these precious blessings. After the apostle therefore, has shown the design of the death of Christ, he immediately introduces, in the words of the text, the glorious effects it produces in man: "Likewise reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin:" And exhibits as already observed, the marks which must manifest themselves to a certainty, not only in the mere imagination, but to the conscience also, if he desires to become a partaker of the benefits and glorious blessings of the death of Jesus Christ.

This is the day, my brethren, this is the day, which we celebrate in remembrance of the death of Jesus Christ,* and on which we ought to sanctify ourselves, as well as especially on the morrow, that we may thus be prepared, on the third, on which we are to appear before God, and in the presence of Jesus, at his table. A great day! an important day; on which, our *salvation* was *purchased*. O my friends, may you all have reason to rejoice with all your hearts, may you comfort yourselves in a confident interest in the ever-memorable scene which we this day, commemorate. Observe therefore, the mark which the apostle exhibits before you; in accordance with which we shall point out the two prominent particulars contained in our text.

*This sermon, was preached by the author, on Good-Friday.

Division I. The mark itself: That you be dead indeed unto sin.

II. The assurance thereof: Likewise reckon ye also yourselves, to be dead.

First part.—"Sin, says the apostle John, chap. iii. 4, is the transgression of the divine law." Sin is a want of conformity to the law and will of God. In sin all are conceived and born: all have transgressed the divine law, and departed from the holy commands and will of God. Of this our first parent Adam made himself guilty, and this guilt is imputed to all his posterity; and we are, therefore, all "conceived and born in sin." Psalm li. 7. Now that depraved and sinful nature, in which we are conceived, and born, makes us quite unfit for any thing good, and inclined to all evil. Out of which, as out of an impure fountain, arise the numberless actual sins, of which we are guilty, daily, hourly; yea, almost every moment, in thoughts words and actions. This is the reason, why all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. Man in his natural state, and before true conversion does nothing but what is sin, before God; he cannot do otherwise, for he has sold himself as a slave to sin; and therefore, sin exercises all power and dominion over wretched man; he must yield to every thing that sin desires of him, and what is most to be lamented is, that man in a state of nature, does not feel this severe yoke, this power and dominion of sin. But he takes delight and pleasure therein; he cannot live without sinning—he is uneasy, quite dissatisfied if he has no opportunity of practising the sinful lusts and desires of his heart. With eagerness he embraces the opportunity, and with a high hand, sins against the Almighty, and presumptuously provokes the Holy One of Israel. The lusts of the eye, the lusts of the flesh, and the pride of life, is the three-headed monster, before whom the carnal and unconverted man bows, and whom he serves with zeal; there is no difference, although one should not be such a gross sinner as another. The seed of all evil lies still concealed in the heart, and the natural man shows himself, on every occasion, in his true disposition, namely, as a

servant of sin, committing sin with eager desire and pleasure.

Thus it is with man in his natural and impenitent state. But when he is arrested by the grace of God, and is convinced of sin, of righteousness and judgment to come; when he obtains a living knowledge of himself—of his condemnation—when he comes, in the way of true repentance and living faith to Christ, when he, under a sense of his misery, of his condemnation, and with true sorrow for his sins, a godly sorrow, takes his refuge to Jesus, desires, hungers and thirsts after him, calling on and crying after him, and seeking in his blood, the cleansing of his soul from sin, and reconciliation with God, and actually finds these blessings so that he, for Christ's sake, is acquitted of all the guilt and punishment of sin, and actually reconciled unto God; then, and then only, my friends, will there be a quite different state of things take place in the experience of the penitent sinner. Now the sinful nature, the sinful lusts and desires are subdued. Here man becomes like unto Christ, in his death,—the old man is crucified with him, and the carnal members are mortified. He renounces sin, and sinful lusts and desires are subdued. If a sinful thought arise in the heart, it is, *by divine grace*, resisted and suppressed. Here a man, by no means, takes any delight, any desire to, or pleasure in sin, no matter how enticing sin may appear; but rather hates and flees from sin. In a word, here a man has the dominion over sin, so that he would not sin presumptuously, for the whole world. "Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal bodies, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof; neither yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin." Rom. vi. 12, 13. He dies unto every thing that may entice or induce unto sin. He dies unto the world, to all its sinful customs, practises and usages; nay, he dies even unto himself, so that he may esteem Christ only. And the best means to this, as he finds, are to watch over and examine himself; to search his heart as well as external deportment, and see especially that he be earnest and steadfast in prayer to God, for the aid of his Holy Spirit, and willingly submit to his teaching, and look thro'

him at all times unto Jesus as the author and finisher of faith; and as such, follow his holy example.

This dying unto sin begins as soon as a man becomes truly penitent. But it is at this time quite feeble, and as yet, only engaged in laying off and abandoning the grosser sins of life. But this takes place more effectually when a man enjoys a sensible interest in Jesus, and is actuated by his spirit, when after justification from sin, the work of true sanctification takes place in the heart. But here it progresses differently; with one the work goes on more rapidly than with another; just in proportion as the soul submits to the leading of the Spirit of God. It is generally a work accompanied with difficulty, inasmuch as it operates against depraved, sinful flesh and blood. But the grace of God can make, and does make it easy. It is also a work that requires time—it is not so easily accomplished as many suppose. Nay, it requires many thousand cuts and strokes to fell the deep-rooted tree of impenitent old life. Old Adam possesses, as it were, a hardy life, and it requires the application of much power before he is fully destroyed. We do not here speak of gross crimes and open sins; for a penitent man soon dies unto these; but we are speaking of sinful propensities, lusts and desires of the world, and of the things of this world, which have an attracting appearance, and especially of dying unto himself. Here it is difficult, until a true and effectual dying unto sin takes place. But it becomes easy if the soul is completely united to the Saviour, and suffers him to operate effectually upon it by his Spirit. The dying unto sin, therefore, is a work, without which none can be truly penitent, and much less a christian. A work which must necessarily take place in the soul, if the fruits of the death of Christ are to be enjoyed; nay, this is the sign, by which it *may* and *must* be *known*. If we desire to be assured of an interest in the benefits and fruits of the death of Jesus Christ, we must be able to say with certainty, that we have died unto sin; hence, says Paul, "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves, to be dead indeed unto sin."

Second part.—The expression which the apostle uses here, must be understood in a spiritual sense.

Reckon does not only mean that a man conceives, tho' uncertain whether it be so or not, as it is generally understood, but by this expression is meant, an indubitable certainty of a man's full assurance, that it is so, and not otherwise. And thus it must by all means be, in dying unto sin.

It will by no means suffice, as it is very far from dying unto sin, to imagine and to believe superficially that we have died unto sin. For this all hypocrites and mere moralists may do. A man may for instance be well educated, or have a natural aversion to gross vices; or for other reasons walk honestly: but can he with propriety say, that he has died unto sin? No, surely not! And if he does, it is nothing else but a mere uncertainty—a mere vain imagination—or a man may have been vicious or dissipated in his youth; but after arriving at a more advanced age, reflection may have taught him not to act thus, but to walk honestly before the world. But can he say, that he has died unto sin? No, surely not. And if he does, it is nothing but a mere uncertainty—a mere imagination. Worldly motives have brought him off from sinning, or sin is dead unto him, on account of old age—and he is not dead unto sin.—Surely these are dangerous snares of Satan, by which he makes men secure and careless—persuading them that all is well—whereas they are standing on the brink of the eternal abyss of hell; and shall inevitably fall into it, in all their security and carelessness, if they do not, by the grace of God, repent of their sins.—Hence it is surely insufficient, to have only a bare uncertain supposition, or a vain imagination, that we have died unto sin. Nay, a man must be fully assured of this. He must know the beginning and progress of this dying unto sin. The beginning in true and sincere repentance; and the progress in true holiness, and in the daily renewing of the spirit of his mind. He must not let externals suffice, but more especially look to the heart; he must know of *both* to a certainty, and be able to conclude, with assurance, and say, that he has died unto sin; and, by the grace of God, is seeking to die more and more unto sin. The works which a man does, —his conversation, his dealings and deportment, must

declare unto others, especially if they are experienced Christians, whether these things are really so, and deception cannot long be practised, but will be sooner or later detected. But where there is a true assurance, of this precious truth, it cannot be concealed.

APPLICATION.

Behold, my friends, these are the genuine marks, by which we may know whether a man can comfort himself with the benefits, and rejoice in the death of Jesus Christ. These are the effects which manifest themselves in man when all these blessings are imputed to him in regeneration. Man becomes *like* unto *Christ* in his *death*, and *dies* unto *sin*. The old man is crucified, and the members on earth are mortified, and buried with Christ. Sin is subdued, and brought into subjection; not only what pertains to the external, but especially the inward, evil propensities and desires: in a word, every thing that is inconsistent with the fellowship of God, in Christ Jesus. And this must not be imaginary, but must take place in the soul with the fullest assurance. The ground of this must be a true repentance and a living faith in Christ.

Well then, how is it with you my friends? What is the state of your hearts respecting this matter? What witness does your conscience afford you herein? Oh! this inward monitor! this faithful witness! to which every sin and transgression stands open as if they were engraved on it with a pen of iron; when it discharges its office with fidelity, how keen are its upbraidings? And this it will do, if it is not altogether lulled asleep by the deceitfulness of sin. Is it not so? When I spoke to you, of this dying unto sin, and of the assurance which a man must have; and especially when I interrogated you respecting yourselves, your own hearts and souls, did not your consciences tell many of you that you lack this experience yet? That you are not yet thus prepared; that you have not yet walked in that way; that you are not yet dead unto sin, but that you delight in sin; that you sin knowingly, and wilfully; that you are yet slaves and servants of sin; or, that you are

only at best, outwardly honest; that you refrained only from gross and open vices, and that your heart is yet entirely depraved, and you live in sin, because you have never walked in the way of true repentance, and of a living faith, in Jesus Christ? Is it not so? Are these not facts? Yes, yes, I know it, of a certainty, to be so. And were you to acknowledge the true state of your heart, you would be constrained to confess it yourselves. But how often has your conscience told you this? How often have you been thus impressed? And yet you are not dead unto sin! Nor have you ever made the attempt, nor have you had any desire to do so; but you live in sin, regardless of every conviction. Oh, ye secure and unconcerned, what will be the result if you continue in this condition! Will not your conscience finally fall asleep? Will you not finally sink down and perish? Oh! this abominable security! You stand on the brink of eternal ruin! You stand at the door of hell! You are every moment in danger of becoming a prey to eternal death! The word of God declares it to you! The preaching of it convinces you! Your own consciences teach it to you! And yet all is in vain, to you. And yet, you still remain in your depraved and sinful state! Can you have any hope while in this state, of ever becoming partakers of the benefits of the death of Christ? No never. And if you do hope this, it is all in vain, as the devil is only deluding you. You are without Christ, and you have no interest in him! Therefore, let me warn you of your eternal destruction. Attend to the call of God to day, to your souls; and be assured that it is he who speaks to you, through your consciences. Beseech him therefore, to enlighten the eyes of your understanding, and to grant you his assistance, that you may truly die unto sin, both from without and from within, and be grounded by his grace in a sincere and hearty repentance for sin, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is indeed bad enough if your own conscience tells you, that you are not yet truly dead unto sin, nor have even made a beginning to die unto sin; and you still continue in all security. But it is still worse if your conscience is altogether asleep: And may there not,

alas! be some present, who have never experienced any of these things? or, who merely imagine, that they are dead unto sin, because they are not as bad as others, and lead externally, a moral life, and have hence, thought, that this does concern them? Oh, deluded children of men! What shall I begin? What shall I do? What shall I say, that your hearts may be made to feel the power of the convicting and converting grace of God? Shall I announce to you the awful truth that you will be inevitably damned, if you leave this world in your present state? Shall I tell you, that you must die an eternal death, if you die not unto sin, by repentance and faith? Ah! you know this yourselves! I have often told you, and yet you will not hear! Yet you will not feel! Yet you will not acknowledge that your hearts are desperately depraved, and that you must actually die unto sin. Nor do you ever agonize in prayer, that this change may be wrought in you. Well, I will not say any thing more, for the present; but commit you to the mercy of God. May God be merciful unto you, and may you experience and feel your misery sensibly; and may God rescue you from your impending destruction, by converting you to Christ; and may all I have said therefore, pierce your souls like a spear, so as to bring you speedily down, to the foot of the cross, that you may there obtain life and salvation.

And you, who are to appear at the Lord's table, on the day after to-morrow; charity constrains me to indulge the hope, that you have, at least, formed the resolution to die unto sin. But, when on the contrary I look to sad experience, I have rather to fear, that you have not thus resolved, and if you have, that this resolution will never be fulfilled. The young attend on the Lord's supper, they keep in or refrain from open sin a little, for a few days before and after it, but then, the ungodly life begins anew. The aged attend the Lord's supper, and, perhaps form a resolution, to die unto sin, but remain satisfied with externals in religion, as well as before. I therefore warn you again, that you continue no longer in this condition, but awake from your security, and seek to obtain a knowledge of your sinful condition. Come, penitent and in faith;

come with the resolution by the grace of God, to die unto sin, and live to God in Christ, and you shall become partakers of the blessings of the Lord. By the grace of God, your souls shall be fed and watered to eternal life. May God be merciful unto us, and may his countenance shine upon us, and may he ever bless us, and do us good! AMEN.

SERMON VII.

ISAIAH, CHAP. XLIV. V. 3.

I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground.

INTRODUCTION.

Among other glorious, acceptable, and consoling emblems, employed in the word of God, to set forth the all-sufficiency of our dear Redeemer, to every true believing soul desirous of salvation; this is one of the choicest, that he is called a "living Fountain. "For with thee," saith David, "is the fountain of life." Psalm xxxvi. 9.

A representation perfectly well adapted to the character, who is the fountain of life, both temporal and spiritual, the only source and author of all things, which cause the children of men, whether according to nature or grace, to rejoice. For if we behold him as the second person in the God-head,—as God with the Father and the Holy Ghost; we are undoubtedly indebted to him for our existence and preservation, for our life, breath, and all that we are. If we moreover consider him as God and man, in one person,—as him who was given to be our Mediator, Saviour, and Redeemer, he is again the fountain—nay, the only fountain, the only source and author of the spiritual life of those who, by nature, are dead in tresspasses and sins. He has purchased the right, to give life unto his people, by his obedience, by his suffering, by his death and resurrection. It is also he who works by his Spirit in the hearts and souls of men; and actually brings them to the enjoyment of this life, and enables them to walk therein, and preserves them to the end. This

spiritual fountain of life, Jesus with his gifts of grace, is never exhausted nor diminished; but is an inexhaustible fountain and spring, flowing at all times, in rich profusion, upon souls desirous of salvation, yea, according as they stand in need. Whether it be in the commencement, or in an advanced state of grace; whether it be souls who are seeking for such as have truly found what tends to their soul's salvation, this fountain of life, from heaven, flows upon all, according to their respective circumstances, and as they stand in need, to their full salvation, comfort, help, life and happiness. We shall be able to comprehend this more fully, by considering the precious, the acceptable and consoling promise which is given unto us, in the words of the text, "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground." Here the rich out-pourings and communications of the Holy Ghost, with all his gifts of graces, as the author of spiritual life, in all its stages, are exhibited, and promised to us in Jesus Christ, the only fountain of life.

Here, therefore, is food, sufficient for you all. Here you may hear the disposition which you *must* possess, if you *have it not*, in order that life and salvation, may flow to you, from the fountain of life. Here you, who are desirous of salvation, may be assured of this. Here you who have obtained salvation, but perhaps are at present, or at some other time, void of a feeling sense of this blessing, may be fully assured anew, and indeed the soul-reviving influences and refreshings of this fountain of life, Christ Jusus: "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground."

Let us here consider:

Division I. The persons spoken of.

II. The promise given to them.

First part.—The persons are, the thirsty and dry. By the *thirsty*, we are to understand the *Jews*, in particular, in the days of the Old Testament, not, as though believers under the Old Testament, were destitute of the necessary means of grace, and gifts of the

Holy Ghost, "For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ." 1 Cor. x. 4. But they are called thirsty, because they had a longing desire for the appearance of the Lord, the Messiah, in the flesh; which desire operated upon their souls, like natural thirst, does upon the body; and this thirst, was increased, by the heavy yoke of the ceremonial law, so that panting under it, they cried aloud, "Oh that thou wouldst rend the heavens, that thou wouldst come down. Oh, that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion. When the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad." Psalm xiv. 7. They are called thirsty, because the gifts and comforts of the Holy Ghost, were not given them so richly, but more sparingly than in the days under the New Testament, to which John refers when he saith, "But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified." John vii. 39. By "*dry ground*" here, we are to understand the *Gentiles*, who, in regard to their souls, were like a dry, uncultivated and unproductive field: because they were without the knowledge of the true God; without saving grace, without the influence of the Holy Ghost; destitute of communion with God; and living without hope and comfort in the world. Hence, the Spirit of the Lord frequently calls the state of the Gentiles a wilderness. Isa. xxxii. 15, 16.

But more particularly, we find generally, such souls are understood by the *thirsty* who are destitute of those blessings whereby their true salvation may be promoted; those who enjoy not that divine grace, which exhibits itself in the forgiveness of sin, and a full assurance of an interest in Jesus as a Saviour; but who also, at the same time, sensibly feel their poverty, and therefore, ardently desire those glorious blessings, and heartily long for the enjoyment of them, as one thirsting for cool water. For as soon as a soul is enlightened of God, and sees with the eyes of the understanding, that it is destitute and bereaved of all that can render it acceptable in the sight of God, and con-

sequently, of every thing calculated to afford it true happiness; nay, that it must eternally perish if it receives not assistance and aid from on high; in such souls, I say, arises an ardent longing, a strong desire, and an inexpressible thirst after the water of life, after a saving interest in the gracious benefits of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the application of his precious blood, in order to be washed and cleansed from all sin; and to be decked with the robe of his righteousness in order to be justified in the presence of God, from all the guilt, and punishment due to sin, and be reconciled unto God, and be permitted to enjoy his favor and countenance. "As the hart panteth after water-brooks, so panteth *that* soul after God, after the living God, after Jesus, the fountain of life." Psalm xlii. 23. And the longer this longing, and thirsting of the soul is permitted to endure, the more ardent does it become, till it is fully assured of an interest in Jesus, and the blessings of his salvation, and so vehement does this desire of the soul become in some cases, that the convicted sinner, cries without ceasing, both night and day, for the Lord to have mercy on him, and refresh him with water, out of the living fountain of life. Here it may truly be said, as it was said of Israel of old, "Oh, that thou wouldst rend the heavens, that thou wouldst come down to me, who am miserable, and wretched; to me who has long thirsted after thee!" "Oh, that help would come out of Zion! Oh, that Jesus would come unto me in the perfect assurance of his grace and love; and that the Lord my Saviour would redeem me, a prisoner, from my misery! then would I rejoice and be exceedingly glad."

By the *dry ground*, we are to understand particularly, such souls, as are indeed assured of the grace and fellowship of God in Christ Jesus. But, who at times feel themselves inwardly tempted and tried, or who do not feel the comforts, and the joy arising from the quickening indwellings, of the Holy Ghost, and hence, may justly be compared, to a dry, and *parched field*, suffering the beating rays of the sun for a season without any refreshing rain. Now both experience, and the word of God, teach us, that the soul is not always on

Mount Tabor, beholding Jesus and his glory; but that it is frequently brought down into Gethsemane, or upon Golgotha, or even to the foot of the cross of Jesus. For even those who are far advanced in the divine life, do not always enjoy seasons of rest, and refreshings from the presence of the Lord; but, there are also hours of trial, of temptation and inward sufferings; hours of dying unto sin, when this, or that member of old Adam is to be cut off; when this, or that evil propensity is to be denied; when this, or that unclean desire is to be mortified; seasons, in which the Lord hides his countenance, and conceals himself as it were behind the veil; seasons, when the Holy Ghost, enters into the most secret recesses of the soul, so that his indwelling, is not so sensibly felt as before. Yea, the soul is frequently led in such dark ways, and the light of God's countenance, is so obscured, that the believer, at certain seasons, feels utterly at a loss how to comprehend the dealings of God towards him, however important. These are circumstances in which, God suffers the soul to be placed, in order to lead it off from dependence upon itself, and every other creature, and to strengthen it in faith, to ground it in hope, and to confirm it in love. But in relation to the dark seasons in the christian's experience, there are some times great droughts, which he is called to endure in being bereft of the presence of the Lord, and the light of his countenance, insomuch, that his soul grows languid and faint, and hang its harp upon the willows. It is in seasons and circumstances like these, brethren, that the soul of the child of God, becomes as it were like dry ground, and like the hart panting after the water brooks, cries out for a refreshing, quickening, and gracious rain, which the good Lord, has promised to send in due season; for in the text he says,

Second part.—"I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground."

By *water and floods*, we are to understand the *Holy Ghost*, with his *blessings*. For there is nothing more common in the Holy Scriptures, than to represent the Holy Ghost and his gifts, by the figure of water; and his blessings by a plentiful shower of rain, and when the

Spirit is poured upon us, from on high, the wilderness will be a field, and the field will be accounted a forest; and it is said, in regard to the blessings of the Holy Ghost, which are compared to a fruitful rain, "And I will make them, and the places around my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in season; there shall be showers of blessings." Ezk. xxxiv. 26. But the Holy Ghost and his gifts, are properly compared to water and rain, because the properties and operations of the Holy Ghost, in the hearts of men, agree with the operations of water and rain; for what water is to a thirsting man, and rain to a parched ground, thirsty and dry souls, enjoy from the Holy Ghost.

When a soul has long thirsted after Jesus; when it has called and cried after him long and unceasingly, then comes at once, the time of its gracious visitation; the time of its gracious quickening. The Saviour indeed hears immediately, and gives the soul some encouragement, so that it may not altogether languish. But the full and perfect assurance he withholds some times, for wise, holy, and righteous purposes. Yet, finally this is given, and indeed in much power. The thirsty finally, drink freely of the fountain of living water. The Holy Ghost who had commenced his work before in the soul, now enters into it in a special manner, and by this divine Spirit, Jesus assures it that it belongs unto him, that it has an interest in all the purchased blessings of his salvation and grace, that it is cleansed by his blood, that its sins are forgiven, and that it is perfectly reconciled with the Father. "The Spirit itself then beareth witness, that it is a child of God, and an heir of eternal life." And here, he makes use of various means, and adopts various ways. He refreshes as a spiritual water, those souls, who are thirsting for grace, by bringing them to the cool waters of the word of God, from which they draw much comfort; and he at the same time, works in them, and assures them of their salvation, or he leads them to the throne of grace, teaching them to make their desires fully known, and is engaged with them in their exercises, or immediately answers their prayers by giving them an assurance of the blessings after which they thirsted, or he leads them in

another manner into the presence of God, and thus communicates to them what they desired; in fine, he does this so effectually, and in such a manner, that the soul becomes fully assured of it. But here, the refreshing, the quickening, and enlivening which a man experiences who is naturally thirsting, when a drink of water, or wine, is given unto him, in his languishing, is not to be compared to that heavenly refreshing, which the soul feels when Jesus pours out his Spirit, and gives the soul to drink of the spiritual waters of grace in the full assurance of himself and all his gracious blessings. At first, the soul can scarcely contain itself, it cannot believe for amazement and astonishment; it is almost beside itself. But afterwards it rejoices in the Lord, is joyful in the God of salvation, and thanks, lauds, and praises his name, without ceasing.

And thus it is, even with souls, who have experienced all this, who have long had the testimony of the Holy Ghost, of the forgiveness of their sins, and of their adoption; but who at times come into a state of suffering, and who have not the sweet influences of the Spirit, as before, and hence, are as a parched and dry ground, panting for a refreshing rain. But at a proper season, all these comforts return again, more powerfully and convincing than ever; for often in the midst of a tempest, or when his strength is gradually lost, the south-wind begins again to blow, the Holy Ghost is poured out in rich profusion; nay, the streams upon those souls, refreshes them gloriously, for their endured barrenness; and comforts, and satisfies them the more abundantly in return for their deprivation of the concious favour and presence of God. And, even as dry and parched ground, becomes more fruitful, by receiving a rain in due season; thus this dealing of God tends only to the increase of grace in those souls, who are led in this way. The blessings of the Spirit, are more acceptable to them, his influences are sweeter, and their joys and pleasures are the more glorious, more holy, and divine. Here it may be emphatically said, "Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance when it was weary." Psalms lxviii. 9.

Concerning the Jews and Gentiles, we would remark, that to them this promise was fulfilled, and the Holy Ghost, with his gifts and blessings was poured out on them, as *thirsty* and *dry ground.* When, after the ascension of Jesus Christ, the preaching of the gospel was received by the Jews, and Gentiles, and a great multitude of them believed on Christ; and were assured by him, of all the saving and gracious benefits of the Lord Jesus Christ. Upon the Gentiles especially, the blessings of the Spirit, came in streams, because, when the greatest part of the Jews rejected the preaching of the gospel, the disciples and apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ, went and preached among the Gentiles. And the word of God, teaches us, that this glorious promise shall be fully accomplished in the latter days; namely, when the fulness of the Gentiles shall be brought in, and all Israel shall be saved. May the Lord hasten that happy period!

APPLICATION.

My friends! You have heard the import of these words, and you know their meaning: "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground." Now, it depends upon how it is, with you in this matter? Can you indeed say, that you have the requisite qualifications of those persons to whom this glorious promise is made, and to whom only it is given? Can you present yourselves as truly thirsting, as those who feel and know their wants and miseries, and have therefore, sought refuge by faith, in Christ, the fountain of life? Can you say that your desires after these things, are ardent? And can you remember the time, when your desires were satisfied; when your thirst was quenched, and when you were quickened; when the Holy Ghost appeared to your hearts, with the riches of the grace of the blessed Jesus; especially the forgiveness of your sins, through the righteousness of Christ, and the peace and fellowship of God, which passes all understanding. Are there also *dry* souls here, who have long been walking in grace, but who now perhaps, find themselves in a state of inward suffering, and are there-

fore thirsting after renewed refreshings from the presence of the Lord? Let me tell such, to be careful, that you judge not of your experience on false grounds, and thereby deceive yourselves to your own hurt. Think not that this is the true and proper thirsting after Jesus and his blessings, if you only have a superficial, and nominal desire after him. No, this is by no means the true and proper thirsting, which arises from a vital knowledge of your extreme wants, and that consists in having sought a refuge in Jesus. But how many are there? How many are there, who have no more than such a *general* desire after Jesus? Alas! the greater part of our hearers, it is to be feared, are of this class; else other fruits would be manifested,* and thus many *dry souls* are found. Oh, that God would have mercy on them! But not of such *dry ones*, who have long been walking in grace, but now, on account of inward suffering, pant after a refreshing rain of the Spirit, which they actually obtain. But such *dry ones*, who have neither the life nor power of a new spiritual life: trees whose fruit withereth; without fruit; twice dead; plucked up by the roots; trees that do not even bare the green leaves of the external duties, much less bring forth good fruit: barren hearts, full of the dens of dragons, and holds of serpents, of sinful lusts and desires: who live without God and Christ in the world. But no wonder there is no thirst, and true desire after Jesus to be found; when there is so much thirsting after the perishing things of this world. For, it is this, that keeps you from your true salvation; and, why you will be given over to condemnation, if you continue thus minded. Say, oh, unconcerned, sinful mortal, who are seeking the things of this world, who art engaged by day, and by night, in increasing your wealth; and studying how to horde up a large amount of silver and gold, pursuing these things early and late, with panting desires; seeking to quench your thirst therein, and thereby forgetting and neglecting the riches of the grace of Jesus? Say, oh, man, what will finally become of you? How will it be with you,

* Yea many have, and know not even of a general desire after Jesus.

when the hour of death approaches: when you shall have to appear at the bar of God? What will your filthy riches avail you then? Can you take any part of it with you? Can you, with all your possessions, and if they were the whole world, redeem your soul from hell? Must you not afterwards suffer eternally for it, and thirst for ever without the least hope of redemption? Arise, therefore, arise, and thirst after Jesus, after his eternal and heavenly riches. Learn to feel your extreme wants, and the thirst of your soul, and come to the fountain of life, and quench your thirst. Come to Jesus, and lay up treasures with him, that shall eternally abide. Has not his Spirit often knocked at your heart? Has he not often sought to convince, and to move you? Surely if you do not obey and give him place in your heart, you shall not become a partaker of him, to apply to you, the riches of the grace of Christ, in time and for eternity. And you, wretched slave of Satan, who are thirsting only after sin and vice; drinking in iniquity like water, who are either a fornicator, a gambler, a drunkard, a profane swearer, or perhaps, guilty of all! How is it with you? What will be your end? Your deeds condemn you openly, and exclude you from the kingdom of heaven. It is evident that you are straw and stubble, which shall be burned with everlasting fire. Arise, and become a penitent publican; cast yourself at the feet of Jesus; thirst after his righteousness, and you shall still find help. Thirst after his blood, and he shall cleanse you from your transgressions. But do it immediately, and without delay!—But your souls in whom the Lord has commenced the work of grace, you who know and feel the want and indigence of your souls; flee, flee hither with all your wretchedness. Here is the living, inexhaustible fountain, Jesus by his Spirit, flowing at all times, in rich profusion upon those, who are spiritually thirsty. "The Spirit and the bride say come, and let him that heareth say come, and let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Come, therefore with all your miseries, cast yourselves at the feet of Jesus, and pray to him steadfastly and unceasingly, for the refreshing riches of his grace, and he

will not deny you. No, no! He will fulfil his promises. To you-ward, they shall all be *yea* and *amen*. Lay hold of him by faith, and receive him with confidence, then he will bestow you his Spirit, who shall convince you of the forgiveness of your sins, and of your being in a state of grace; and he shall cry in you Abba, Father.

Finally: as respects you, my dear brethren who are already in a state of grace, and in fellowship with Jesus, who have received an evidence of your interest in the riches of the grace of Jesus; but, who are at present, suffering, inwardly, being tempted and tried. Be not amazed: you shall be tried in faith, strengthened in hope, and confirmed in love. Submit, and surrender yourselves to the Lord, and to his dealings. "Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness, and gladness to the heart of the pious."

If you submit yourselves to the Lord, and to his dealings, with steadfast fidelity, then the time and season of your gracious visitation shall appear. The comfort, the blessings, and the refreshing grace of the Holy Ghost, shall be poured out upon you; and the saying of Jesus shall be accomplished in you, when he says: "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his *(body,)* belly, shall flow rivers of living water." May God grant this, and to his name be the praise! AMEN.

SERMON VIII.

JOHN, CHAP. XX, V. 17.

But go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God.

INTRODUCTION.

It was a remarkable occurrence, my friends, which happened to the patriarch Jacob, when he was compelled to flee from his brother Esau, into Mesopotamia. While on his journey, and resting in the night, under the canopy of heaven, he saw in a dream, a ladder standing with one end on the earth, and the other reaching up to heaven: the angels of God ascending and descending on it; but God himself standing above and communicating to the fugitive *Jacob* the glorious promise, that he would be a God unto him, and his seed; that he would be with him in his lying down and rising up; that his seed should become a great people; and, that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed. Genesis xxviii.

Now, what do you think that the Lord intended to make known by that remarkable and wonderful vision? Why, according to my opinion, nothing else than the reunion of heaven and earth; the reunion of fallen man with HIMSELF, and the holy angels; the blessed fellowship between God and helpless sinners, who should be, and who really were, restored by the Son of God, the only Mediator between God and men. For by the fall that intimate union of heaven with the earth; the celestial family and household of God with the terrestrial; the blessed fellowship between God and man, was entirely interrupted. It ceased entirely, and there was not the least appearance to man, or any hope whatever,

how things might be brought again to their former state. But this union and fellowship was again restored in Christ Jesus. For "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." For it pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell, and by him reconcile all things to himself in heaven and on earth; that by the blood of the cross all things might be reconciled to himself. Christ Jesus, our Surety and Mediator, is, therefore, the cause of the reunion of God with fallen man, of things terrestrial with things celestial. By him, and through him, the holy angels are made ministering spirits, "sent forth to minister to them, who shall be heirs of salvation." By him and through him, the Lord, as a covenant God, as a loving and compassionate father, will deal graciously with all who appear before him, as helpless sinners, with prayer and supplication, according to his appointment. By him and through him, he is a reconciled God and Father, to all who are born again by his power, and are united with Christ through faith and the Holy Ghost. These important truths, among others, are implied in the words of the text, where our Saviour says: "But go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.

In contemplating and examining, therefore, these important truths, contained in the words of the text, let us consider

Division I. The command given in the words, "Go to my brethren and say unto them."

II. The more immediate import given in the words, "I ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God."

First part.—Go to my brethren and say unto them. This command was especially given by the Redeemer to *that* friend of his who so ardently and unremittingly loved him: I mean *Mary Magdalene.* She came on the third day to the sepulchre of our Lord Jesus. But, after finding no one in it, and weeping bitterly,

Jesus, the arisen Saviour, spake to her without being recognized by her. But when she recognized him she desired to be convinced of the reality of his resurrection by touching his body: "then said Jesus unto her, Touch me not, for I have not yet ascended to my Father; *but go unto my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend to my Father and your Father, unto my God and your God.*" Here we may understand this command as including the Church of Christ, and in particular, every faithful and sincere servant of Christ, to whom the command is given, "*Go unto my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend to my Father and your Father, unto my God and your God.*" But whom does our blessed Saviour understand by HIS BRETHREN? In general, my friends, he understands all mankind; because, by his blessed incarnation, he partook of their nature, and thereby exhibited himself, as their brother: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same:" —"wherefore, in all things, it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren; that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." Heb. ii. 14, 17. But here in particular, the blessed Saviour calls his disciples and apostles *his brethren*, and with them every penitent, believing and regenerated soul, without distinction. Therefore when the Redeemer was told that his mother and brethren were desirous of seeing him, he answered, "My mother and my brethren are those who hear the word of God, and do it." Luke viii. 28. For since the relationship of the Lord Jesus, in consequence of his incarnation, is only according to the flesh, so, on the other hand, it is only with truly penitent and believing souls according to the Spirit. Christ, the Son of God, was begotten of the Father, from eternity, in an incomprehensible manner; so are those who are brethren of the Lord Jesus, according to the Spirit, born anew of God by the power of the Holy Ghost, and for Christ's sake (who is the first-born brother,) received into adoption. Hence Peter says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy has begotten us again unto a lively hope." 1 Peter i. 3.

Second part.—Now these brethren, according to their various situations and circumstances, are to be informed agreeably to the command in the text, in relation to Jesus Christ, "I ascend to my Father and to your Father, and to my God and your God."

The blessed Saviour calls *God* HIS *Father*, as the second person in the ADORABLE TRINITY, as the Son of God; begotten of the Father from eternity, in an incomprehensible manner, as it is written in the second Psalm: "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." But he calls him *his God* in respect to his assuming human nature, or as our Surety and Mediator, because he was obedient to him in all things, as he declared himself by the mouth of David; "Lo, I come—in the volume of the book it is written of me; I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart." Psalm xl. 8, 9.

But, now let us examine, 1st. In what sense God is a Father and a God to all men. 2nd, In what sense he is in particular a Father and God of penitent and believing souls for Christ's sake. For the blessed Saviour says, I ascend to my Father and *to your Father*, to my God and *to your God*.

1. God is the Father of all men; by creation, preservation, and the governing of all things, particularly of men. For it is only he to whom we are indebted, as our common Parent, for life, for breath, for food, for clothing, for our existence, and for all we have. He, as the common Parent in the universal kingdom of nature, not only created, but preserves, provides for and protects all mankind. As his children, as the work of his hand, they may look to him for every good gift, for his paternal favors, love, grace and mercy, especially as pertaining to everlasting life, if they depart not wilfully from him, by disobedience, malice and obstinacy. Hence it is said, by the prophet, "Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?" Matt. ii. 10. Therefore, our blessed Saviour teaches not only his disciples and believers in common, on account of their right by adoption, but mankind generally, to pray,

"Our Father!" — because all need his favors and blessings.

2. God is not only a Father, but also, the God of all mankind. The first relates only in general, to the creation, preservation, and providing for *all* men temporally. But that God is the God of all mankind, has particular respect to spiritual things; to the redemption and salvation of fallen sinners. Of this God speaks himself, by the prophet: "Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?" Jer. xxxii. 27. And Paul says, "Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also!" Rom. ii. 29. For the name ELOHIM, in the original signifies a *covenant God*, a God of *helpless sinners*. By virtue of which, God is willing to be reconciled to all, and for Christ's sake, receive them, into the covenant of grace, and into his communion and favor. And hence, he declares, so solemnly that he has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Ez. xxxiii. 11. "That all men may be saved: and come to the knowledge of the truth." 1 Tim. ii. 2. If only the sinner complies with the requirements of the *covenant*, and performs the duties thereof, according to God's appointment, and comes in sincere repentance and living faith; then God will be his God—the Lord himself will grant him grace and help, if he does not wantonly resist the operations of the Spirit.

And, all this is the happy consequence of the incarnation of Christ, by which, according to the flesh, he is friend and brother to *all* the blessed and precious fruits of his mediatorial office, whereby he placed himself between God and fallen men. For it is only for Jesus' sake, the world stands: Only for Jesus' sake, God as a common Father, deals graciously with us, the children of men, even in temporal things. Only, and alone for Jesus' sake, God can, and will be a covenant God, to Adam's fallen race. Since without Christ, he must needs inflict temporal and eternal punishment upon the sinner in order to satisfy his holiness and justice; and which actually does take place in relation to every impenitent sinner, who refuses to improve the day of

grace, by entering into covenant with God; into the covenant of grace, through Jesus Christ, in order to become an actual partaker of the blessings which have been purchased for all, and enter into a close union with God through Christ

1. But God is especially a father of his truly penitent and believing *people*, not only in general, by virtue of their creation, and preservation, his care and protection of them, according to the body, and moreover as to what pertains to the welfare of the immortal spirit; but in particular, in regard to the new birth, the renewing of the heart, and mind in them, by his grace and Spirit, whereby they receive a truly filial spirit, and can cry, "Abba, Father!" Whereby they are also entitled to adoption, not having need to stand afar off with fear and trembling, but may with filial confidence approach God their heavenly Father, and with all boldness, come to the throne of grace, "to obtain mercy, and to find grace to help in time of need." Heb. iv. 16. Whereby they may always comfort themselves with the assurance of his special care and protection; because, "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry." Psalm xxxvi. 16. "And, as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." Psalm ciii. 13. For there is a great difference in having God as a common father, and a Father in Christ Jesus, by virtue of the new birth. In the first case, man has no filial trust and confidence towards God, as his Father, but shuns and fears him servilely, as a righteous judge, and is finally cast out with Ishmael, from his father's house, if he does not truly repent. But in the latter case, the soul is, by virtue of the witness of the Spirit, fully assured, that it is received for the sake of the merits of Christ, by the adoption into the family of God, and that it may carefully confide in the paternal care and love of God, and as a "joint heir with Jesus Christ, may on good grounds hope for eternal life." Rom. viii. 17.

2. God is especially, a God of truly penitent and believing souls: namely, such of whom it may be said, that they are assured, and are really convinced on scriptural ground, that God is reconciled unto them, for

Christ's sake, and that they have actually been admitted into fellowship with him; because, they have by his grace, complied with the requisitions of the covenant of grace, which he himself, has prescribed; because they have repented, by his grace, of their sins, and through faith have laid hold on Christ, as the hope placed before them in the gospel, and by virtue of the Holy Ghost, have obtained the assurance of the forgiveness of their sins. But there is also again a great difference, between God being in general, a covenant God, to all the fallen race of Adam, for Christ's sake; and his being in particular such, toward penitent and believing souls. For in relation to the first, a person cannot be assured of any thing else, than that God for Christ's sake, will be a convenant God if he comes by his grace, in the way of God's appointment unto him. But in the latter case, the soul is fully assured, that he really is and will be a covenant God in all eternity. Hence, says David, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance." Psalm xxxiii. 12.

Now, our blessed Saviour commands his brethren, and especially his people to say, that HE ASCENDS TO THIS GOD, which is to be understood of his bodily and visible ascension, when forty days after his resurrection from the dead, he ascended visibly from Mount Olivet, in a cloud into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God his heavenly Father. But what is here most important for our examination, is this: to notice that Christ ascended in behalf of *all*, as *his brethren*. 2. That he ascended in behalf of his people, as his brethren, by the supernatural regeneration of the Holy Ghost.

1. Christ ascended to Heaven in behalf of *all*, as *brethren according to the flesh*, in order, that he might appear there as a general advocate, or intercessor, to plead for them, and to promote their soul's salvation, by virtue of his meritorious sufferings, provided they are only willing to look unto him, by true repentance and faith, and call on him for his blessing. Hence, it is written, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." Isa. xlv. 22. He also ascended

into Heaven in behalf of all men, as his brethren according to the flesh, in order to send down the Holy Ghost, "who should reprove the world," that is, the men of the world "of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." John xvi. 8. By virtue of which, the Lord Jesus, convinces the hearts and souls of men by his Spirit, and works, by him in them, in order to bring them to a knowledge of themselves, of their sins, offences, and transgressions, and the guilt and punishment they have deserved. The blame then, rests not on the part of God, if men under all the convictions and reprovings of the Spirit of God continue in their natural depravity, and obtain not the favor of God, and the benefits of the covenant of grace. But they are themselves to blame, because they resist the operations of God's Spirit, and will not be convinced and reproved by him, and be brought into the way of repentance and faith. Hence, it is their own unbelief that shall condemn them in the last day.

2. Christ ascended in behalf of his *people*, of penitent and believing souls, who according to the Spirit, are his brethren, in order to reconcile each of them with God, and to make them partakers of the riches of grace and mercy. For there he prays for every penitent sinner: Father, "deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom." Job xxxiii. 24. He ascended in behalf of his people, moreover, in order to send the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, into their hearts, "who shall teach them all things, and bring all things to their remembrance, whatsoever he said unto them, who shall guide them into all truth; and who shall take what is of the Lord Jesus, and shew it unto them." John xiv. 26—chap. xvi. 13, 14. "Who shall lead them and give them an evidence of their adoption and of eternal life." Rom. viii. 14—17, who shall establish them in Christ, *seal* them, and give them an earnest of their salvation." 2 Cor. ii. 21, 22. He ascended in behalf of his people, in order to assist their infirmaties and to cover them with the robe of his perfect righteousness. Hence, says John, "These things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the

righteous." 1 John ii, 2. He ascended in behalf of his people, in order to comfort them in tribulation, in adversity and in temptations, and rescue them graciously out of all their trouble. Hence, Stephen saw him as the Son of Man, at the right hand of God, ready to assist him. Finally he ascended in behalf of his people, in order "to prepare a place for them, till he come again, and receive them unto himself, that they may be eternally where he is." John xiv. 3.

APPLICATION.

My beloved hearers! permit me now to come a little closer to your hearts. You have now all heard, of what you may rejoice in Jesus your Redeemer. How you may, or already have, through him and for his sake, a gracious and merciful God and Father in heaven; and the reason why Jesus ascended visibly after his resurrection, before the eyes of his disciples, unto his Father, and to your Father, to his God and to your God. Go, said our blessed Redeemer—go and tell this unto my brethren, unto all mankind, especially unto my faithful disciples and followers; unto the poor in spirit; unto those who are hungry and thirsty after righteousness; unto those that mourn; unto the meek and merciful; unto the pure in heart; unto the peacemakers; unto those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake. My brethren, I will now comply with this acceptable, this consoling, this joyful command of your and my dearest Redeemer, in the present hour. He ascended to his Father and your Father, to his God and your God. I proclaim, in his name, a general pardon, a general forgivenèss unto you all. God is willing to be reconciled unto you all, for his sake. By him, God has, or is willing to enter with you all, into a covenant of grace; a covenant, different from that of works. He is willing to be your God, your covenant God; he is willing to receive you into his fellowship, and that of free mercy and grace, and to forgive you your sins, and admit you as his children into the mansions of bliss; *provided* you only come unto him in the way he has prescribed, by repentance and faith. You have innumerable proofs

of this! To whom are you indebted for your life, your health, your food and clothing? To whom are you indebted for the present opportunity, of being assembled here to hear the word of God preached? To whom, but to our common Father, and gracious Benefactor in heaven, who has hitherto manifested himself as a Father unto all, for Jesus his Son's sake, and has sought to draw you to himself as it were with cords of love? Have you not already experienced the benefits of the ascension of Christ in a higher degree than many others? Has not Jesus frequently been knocking at your hearts? Has not his Spirit oftentimes convinced you of sin, of righteousness, and of a judgment to come? Have you not often felt that a change must take place in you? Has not Jesus afforded you ample means for the accomplishment of this object, from above?

But how is it with you at present? Have all of you entered into close fellowship with God through Christ? Have you complied with the requisitions of the covenant which constitutes us true brethren and sisters of the Lord Jesus, in the Spirit, constituting us children of God and heirs of eternal life? Has sincere repentance, living faith and true regeneration been wrought in you?

Oh! how deplorable it is with many, nay, the greater part of you! If the grace, love and favors of our heavenly Father, if the general and first proffers of these favors, in Christ Jesus, the reconciliation of a covenant God, are not regarded, but rejected, how can we then possibly expect more? May not the Lord justly complain of you, O sinner! "Am I a father—who honors me; am I Lord—who fears me?" And may not Jesus exclaim and say, "My friend, also, who hath eaten bread with me, hath lifted up his heel against me." How is it possible that you can pray, "Our Father," with a good conscience? How can you, with a good conscience, call God your Father, since you conduct yourself as a disobedient son or daughter towards him, by violating his most holy will, and not acknowledging his mercies? How can you say that he is your God—your covenant God, since you have never entered into covenant with him; since you have never yet complied

with the requisitions of the covenant, nor come to him by his grace, in Christ Jesus, as a penitent sinner? How can you appreciate Jesus and his mercies if you give not place to the reproof of his Spirit?

Therefore consider your disobedience towards the best of Fathers, in heaven; arise, and come as a lost but penitent child to him; bow before him, and confess unto him, and say, "Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son," or thy daughter. Delay not, but come while it is called to-day. To-morrow! to-morrow it may be too late! To-morrow! the door of mercy may be shut! To-day! be diligent and save your soul, while the Lord knocks at your heart, through his Spirit! while he stands ready to grant us his grace; and ready to receive us into covenant with himself!

But you, who have been reconciled unto your covenant God by being born again, from above. Endeavor to realize the dignity to which you have been called and exalted; be sensible of the glorious privileges of which you have been made partakers. God is your Father, and you are his children—what a glorious privilege! God is your covenant God!—what amazing grace! Jesus, *your brother*, has ascended to this God and Father in behalf of you!—whatglorious prospects for eternity! O praise, love and glorify your heavenly Father, and never prove disobedient to this your faithful covenant God.

Even here your dignity is great; but when Jesus your brother comes in that notable day of the Lord, then you shall still enjoy greater prerogatives! He shall awaken your bodies from the dead, and present you as to soul and body before his Father and your Father, before his God and your God. There you shall be no more exposed to tribulations; but every tear shall be wiped from your eyes. Then, then! shall you ascribe hallelujahs, praises, honors, thanksgiving and glory to your Triune and covenant God—Father, Son and Holy Ghost, to all eternity! AMEN.

SERMON IX.

ZACHARIAH, CHAP. xii, v. 10.

And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplications."

INTRODUCTION.

When Paul, that highly privileged and enlightened apostle, contrasts the happiness and privileges of the church, under the New Testament, with that of the Old Testament, he does not know what language to use, that is more emphatical by way of inference, than this, *"Let us therefore come boldly to a throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."*

The Israelites had indeed, a golden altar of incense, in the tabernacle, and afterwards in the temple, upon which, they burnt frankincense, as directed by the LORD, according to the Levitical service, representing the prayers of believers, which they offered to their covenant God. Thus they had, in some measure, in the ascending of the smoke, from the altar of incense, an evidence, that their prayers, their sighs, and their supplications, were acceptable before the Lord. But none were allowed to burn incense, on the altar of the Lord, but the priest, according to his order which was to point out that the throne of grace was not accessible to all.

But, under the dispensation of the New Testament, all those ceremonies are dispensed with, and abolished; every believer can appear, with his wants, before God, without priest and without altar, "and may obtain mercy and find grace to help, in time of need."

It was this, of which the church, under the Old Testament dispensation, was apprised by the teachings of the Spirit of God, and of which she rejoiced. It was this, by which the Spirit of God comforted and established believers under the Old Testament, in giving them the promise through the prophets, that in the time of the Messiah, believers should have free access by prayer, and supplication to God, in a special manner. Of this we have an exceedingly glorious evidence in the words of my text; where God declares, by the prophet Zachariah, "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace, and of supplication."

Connexion.—After the prophet had made known unto the Jews, in the preceding chapter, the awful judgments of God, that should befal them, namely, their destruction by the Romans, because they not only rejected, in an ungodly manner, the Lord, the Messiah, who protected them as the angel of the covenant, and who would lead and direct them as a faithful shepherd, when he appeared in the flesh, but whom they should purchase, for thirty pieces of silver in order to nail him to the cursed tree of the cross.

In order, that not all the courage of the few believing, among the Jews, who lamented the loss of Joseph and breach of Zion, I say in order that their courage might not altogether fail, the prophet promises them, in the context, that the Lord God would, in a special manner, be with them and protect them against their enemies, and deliver them out of all their tribulations; that their enemies should be destroyed, but they should be saved; and that he would pour upon them the Spirit of grace and supplication. Thus the words of my text contain:

Contents.—*A glorious promise of the gracious outpouring of the Holy Ghost, as the Spirit of grace and supplication, upon all believers under the dispensation of the New Testament: introduced as a special cause of comfort, for those who are ready to receive the Messiah, by faith in his advent.*

Let us therefore, notice,

DIVISION I. The persons, to whom this promise is made; and,

II. The promise itself.

First part.—The persons to whom the prophet made this promise, in the name of the LORD, are, "*the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.*"

By the house of David, we may in one sense, understand, either the family or posterity of David, or in another sense of the word, we may understand the citadel of Zion, where David formerly resided, and hence it was called the city of David.

By the inhabitants of Jerusalem are intended, the inhabitants of the city, as well as the inhabitants of all Judea, which Jerusalem was notable on account of its splendid temple, wherein the Lord dwelled, and where they served him, by offerings and other ceremonies.

From this it is easy to conclude, that the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, are not to be taken, in a proper, but improper sense; for inasmuch as all things among the Jews, were typical, so were also Mount Zion, and the city of Jerusalem typical.

Mount Zion was a type of the church under the New Testament. In this sense, it frequently occurs in the sacred scriptures; thus it is written, "Say unto the daughter of Zion, that is, to the church under the New Testament, thy salvation cometh." Paul viewed it in the same sense, when writing to believers, "But, ye are come unto Mount Zion," that is into the bosom, of the true church, of the New Testament. Heb. xii.

But Mount Zion, was in a special manner typical, in so far as related to the house of David, as may be seen in the context, in the eighth verse, where it is said, in speaking of times to come, "that the house of David shall be as the daughters,* yea, as the angel of the Lord, whereby it is impossible to understand an earthly glory, which the family, or house of David, were to enjoy on Mount Zion; because, the generation and family of David not only diminished gradually, but Zion together with Jerusalem, was destroyed and razed to the ground by the Romans.

*As God.—Translator.

Consequently, this has reference to the spiritual house of David—to the church of God, under the dispensation of the New Testament. The church is called the house of David, because the spiritual David, Jesus Christ, as the king of the daughter of Zion, ruled, yes, dwelled therein, as in a house; hence, Paul observes, "That Christ dwells in our hearts by faith."

The inhabitants of Jerusalem were also typical. Jerusalem, was a type of the church militant, and of the church triumphant. To the church triumphant particular reference is had, when Paul speaks of the "Jerusalem above, which is pure, and the mother of us all," and when he says, "That we have came unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem." The church militant is to be understood, when it is said, "speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem," "break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem, for the LORD, comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem." The *inhabitants* of *this city*, were *typical*, of the members of the church; hence, they are also frequently called the daughters of Jerusalem, which could with the more propriety be so called, because the firstlings of the church of the New Testament, were gathered in the earthly Jerusalem, and from thence, the word of the LORD, went forth into all the land, according to Isaiah, chap. ii. 3. Thus we are in fine, to understand by the house of David, and by the inhabitants of Jerusalem, all members of the true church, be they Jews or Gentiles, as many as were admitted by baptism into the spiritual Jerusalem, into the church of the New Testament, and were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, as the earnest of our inheritance.

And to these the promise, is given, "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and supplication."

Second part.—The procuring cause, of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, or the person who promises this, is indeed not positively mentioned, it is only indefinitely said, "*I will pour.*" Yet it is evident from the context that we are to understand, *the* LORD the

MESSIAH, *Jesus Christ*, for it is said, "They, (the believers under the New Testament,) shall look upon *me whom* they, (the Jews,) have pierced;" this was accomplished in Jesus, John xix. whence it is evident, as already said, that it is the Son of God, our blessed Redeemer, Jesus Christ, who promises to pour out the Spirit of grace and supplication."

By the *Spirit* we generally understand the third *person* of the Trinity as distinct from the *Father* and the *Son*, yet of the same nature, being *God*, co-eternal with the Father and the Son: "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the *Father*, the *Word*, and the *Holy Ghost*, and these three are one." 1 John, v. He is called a Spirit, because he proceeds from the Father and the Son, and is breathed out as a breath, and on which account he is called "the breath of the Almighty, and the breath of the mouth of God." Psalm xxxiii. 6. But we may hereby also understand, as is frequently the case, the operations of this Spirit. In regard to this, we may consider him in a twofold view. He is called,

A spirit of grace.—First, because he is given unto us without price, and out of mere grace; and secondly, because he is the author of the gifts of grace, which Jesus received without measure. Yet so, "that we may receive of his fulness grace *upon* grace." It is the Holy Ghost that produces in the hearts of believers, all the saving benefits purchased by Christ. He works in them,

Effectual calling: Because it is he that does the good pleasure of the Father, and makes the word of the Son quick, hence it is, that although the voice of the Father and the Son be frequently heard, yet it is not sufficient to the converting of the sinner; but when the inviting voice of the Spirit is heard, it cannot be withstood; for he is, as the bow of Jonathan, that never faileth; he is the sceptre of the kingdom of Jesus Christ, who "breathes upon the dry bones." Ez. xxxvii. The word of God, (no matter how powerfully it may beam into the heart of enlightened souls,) is without his operations a sealed book, and a dead letter, written upon tables of stone. He works in them,

Faith: He purifies and renews their hearts by faith, that they may have the privilege and liberty to approach the Lord, and the throne of grace; and hence he is called the Spirit of Faith, by whom Jesus is called Lord, and among whose fruits is *faith.* 1 Cor. xii. Gal. v. He works in them,

Regeneration: Which is called the *renewing of the Holy Ghost.* "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God; for that which is born of the Spirit is spirit," saith he who is TRUE and FAITHFUL. "We are changed by the Spirit of the Lord." 2 Cor. iii. Wherefore he is called the "Spirit of Life." Rom. viii. Therefore David prays, "Create within me a new heart, and give me a right spirit;" which the *Lord* promised by the prophet: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you." Ez. xxxvi. He works in them,

Sanctificative, (Holiness:) From which his name is derived, hence he is called the *Holy* Ghost, and for this reason his work is called, "the sanctification of the Spirit." 2 Thes. ii. 13. Wherefore, also, Paul wrote to the saints at Corinth: "Ye are sanctified by the Spirit of our God." 1 Cor. vi. He works in them,

Sealing: Hence Paul writes to the Ephesians:—"Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." It was the Holy Ghost, who afterwards appeared in Jerusalem, "when a man clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side, and had gone through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sighed and cried for all the abominations that were in the midst thereof." Ez. ix. "He is the Spirit that beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Wherefore David prayed, "Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me." Psalm li. And wherefore he is frequently called the *Comforter.*

Thus the Holy Ghost may, with propriety, be called the *Spirit of grace,* and consequently believers are made partakers of grace; when they are called, by him, out of darkness into the marvellous light; when they are renewed in regeneration after the divine image; when

they obtain deliverance and pardon of their sins in justification; when they obtain a right to eternal life, adoption, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost; when they are comforted, sanctified, sealed, and preserved, and strengthened in grace, to grow and increase therein; when they have received the most indubitable evidence of their eternal salvation, and enjoy the first fruits of heaven here on earth, and finally when they actually participate the joys of heaven. For all this Paul ascribes to the free grace of God: "Ye are saved by grace." But, as these are all benefits of grace, to obtain which, we must call upon God, and not knowing how to call upon God as we ought,

The Spirit of supplication is given, who works in us the nature and properties of *the prayer* which is acceptable to God. The Holy Ghost teaches us how to pray

In humility and true penitence; so that we, in considering the state of our souls, our wants and infirmities, may humble ourselves before the Lord, and whatever we desire, to commend it alone to his free grace and good pleasure, confessing with Abraham "that we are but dust and ashes; and with Jacob, esteeming ourselves, not worthy of the least of all his mercies," and that we appear before the Lord, as Daniel with our prayer, not depending on our own righteousness, but upon his great mercies—that we like Ezra and the publican be ashamed to lift our eyes heaven-ward." Gen. xxxii. Danl. ix. Ez. ix. Luke xviii. He teaches us to call upon God in sincerity and with fervor. Ps. cxlv. He inspires us with a holy zeal to call upon the Lord; to appear before him, with our wants and dsires, and plead warmly with him, for that grace and assistance which all need, according to our circumstances, that he would grant them unto us, according to the riches of his grace and goodness; beseeching the Lord, as David: "Bow down thine ear, O LORD! hear me, for I am poor and needy. O thou, my God, save thy servant that trusteth in thee, for I cry unto thee daily." Ps. lxxxvi. He teaches us to pray

In faith and confidence, so that our prayer is not only founded upon the precious promises, which the Lord

has given us in his word, but also especially upon the perfect merit of our blessed Redeemer—Jesus Christ—"in whose name we beseech God to be merciful unto us, and give ear to our prayer. He brings, therefore, to our mind what the Redeemer assures every believer: "For whatsoever you ask of the Father, in my name, he will give it unto you."

And that the children of God may not doubt, in the least, of the gracious hearing of their prayer, the Holy Ghost represents unto them,

1. The invariable truth, and the precious promises of God. He assures them by the mouth of his servant Paul, "That all his promises are yea and amen." He represents unto them,

2. The unmerited mercies of God. He tells them by his servant David: "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." Ps. ciii. He represents unto them,

3. The perpetual intercession of their Redeemer, Jesus Christ. He assures them through Paul, "That Christ is at the right hand of God, and maketh intercession for them." He writes unto them by John, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, who is the propitiation for our sins." Thus, the Holy Ghost, teaches the children of God to pray in faith and confidence. But he also teaches them,

To be steadfast in prayer and cease not, until they receive an answer from the Lord; that they ought always to pray and not faint." Luke xviii.; that they as Jacob, "wrestle with the Lord, and not let him depart, till he blesses them;" to continue in prayer, as the woman of Canaan, and cry after Jesus without ceasing. Mat. xv. But should they become weary, he renews their strength, that they may "mount up with wings, as eagles." Isa. xl. "If they are infirm, he helpeth also their infirmities, and if they know not what to pray for, as they ought, he maketh intercession for them with groanings, which cannot be uttered." Rom. viii.

And this is the full measure of the glorious operations of the Holy Ghost, in believers under the New Testament, which the words of my text express, by

the figure of *pouring out:* "But I will pour out upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace, and of supplication." This expression is borrowed from water, whereby the Holy Ghost is frequently represented. Thus it is said by the prophet Isaiah, "For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring." Isa. xliv. And, "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." John vii. In the days of the new covenant, "we shall draw water out of the wells of salvation with joy." Isa. xii.

The accordance between water and the Holy Ghost, will appear evident from the following particulars:

As water is a necessary element for the body, so is also the Holy Ghost indispensably necessary for the eternal welfare of our immortal souls: "If I wash thee not," said Christ to Peter, "thou hast no part with me." John xiii.

The natural water quenches the thirsting of the body; but by the streams of the Spirit of Christ, is quenched that ardent thirsting of the soul, for which the people of God sigh: "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God!" Ps. xlii. And the answer to this is, "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life." Rev. xxi. Our blessed Saviour saith, "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." John iv.

Water is of a subduing nature. In the gracious water of the Holy Ghost, the guilt of sin, together with the old man, is subdued; for he subdues our iniquities, and "casts all our sins into the depths of the sea." Mic. vii. Hence it is said, "Oh that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea." Isa. xlviii.

Water is also refreshing in time of great heat; the saving streams of the influences of the Holy Ghost, afford the most agreeable refreshment in the heat of

temptation. Ps. xxiii. For thus runs the promise, that believers "shall neither hunger nor thirst, neither shall the heat nor sun smite them; for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, and even by the springs of water shall he guide them." Isa. xlix.

As water cleanses from bodily filth, even so the Spirit of Christ cleanses the filth of the soul, namely, from sin. Hence, there is a cleansing quality ascribed to the Holy Ghost. Isa. iv.

Finally, water may also be an emblem of the fruits of the Holy Ghost, which should be seen and enjoyed under the New Testament. For even as water is a bountiful and common element, so there should also be a bountiful measure of the gracious gifts of the Holy Spirit communicated unto ever tongue, and nation, and kindred, without respect to persons.

Therefore, we are to understand by this outpouring, the abundant streams of the gifts of the Holy Ghost, to the cleansing, and the full refreshing of many souls, with which sense many promises agree: "And it shall come to pass afterwards, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions." Joel iv. "They shall be led beside still waters." Ps. xxiii. "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures." Psalm xxxvi.

Nay, such a rich effusion of the Holy Ghost is promised, not only in the primitive but also the subsequent periods of the New Testament. For although the gifts of the Holy Ghost were copious in the days of the apostles, still we are to look for a renewal of these showers, until the Spirit from on high be poured out upon us, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest." Isa. xxxii. "And then the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall have a fountain opened for sin and uncleanness." Zach. xiii.

All these promises have really been fulfilled. John the Baptist foresaw these things when he said unto the Jews, "There cometh one after me, and he will baptise

you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." Mat. iii. The blessed Saviour gave many assurances thereof: "The Comforter—the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." John xiv. In the actual fulfilling of this promise Paul glories: "We have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." 1 Cor. ii. "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen, unto the glory of God by us. Now he who establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God." 2 Cor. i. "In whom (Christ) also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise." Eph. i.

APPLICATION.

And now by way of application, we remark that believers are happier under the New Testament, than those were who lived under the Old, for upon them the spirit of grace and supplication is poured, in reality. They have received his grace richly, "for the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." John i. Believers under the Old Testament were the people of God too, but not so highly privileged as those under the New Testament. These were to receive the law in their inward parts, and have it written in their hearts, and the Lord promised that he would be their God and they should be his people. They are happier than the former, because they have not "received the spirit of bondage, but the spirit of adoption whereby they cry Abba, Father." Rom. viii. Now is the acceptable time for believers to call upon God, in spirit and in truth. O, what then can be more desirable in relation to such glorious privileges of the Church of the New Testament, than that we all may become partakers of them, and have cause to rejoice therein! Oh! that the spirit of grace and supplication might be poured out upon us!

But, if we desire to have an assurance of this, my friends, let us thoroughly examine ourselves, whether

we are of the spiritual family of David, and whether we are inhabitants of Jerusalem; whether we are members belonging to the invisible church; whether our citizenship is in heaven; whether Jesus is our king, and we his subjects, and whether we as such, submit to his laws and commandments? Let us consider, whether the Spirit of grace, is operating in us? Whether we are *called*, *justified*, *born again*, and *sanctified?* Nay, whether we bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, such as love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance? Let us examine ourselves, whether we pray, with true *humility*, *devotion*, *zeal*, *fervency*, and *in faith?* And whether we continue steadfast, in prayer, until we are heard and answered of the Lord.

If we are not, of the spiritual house of David; if we are not numbered with the inhabitants of the heavenly Jerusalem: but on the contrary, are of spiritual Babel, and Sodom, or the spiritual Egypt of this world; if we are not born again, justified, sanctified, and renewed after the image of God, but on the contrary, are dead in tresspasses and sins; if we are, instead of a fruitful field, an unfruitful desert; if our prayers, have not the before-mentioned properties, then the Spirit of grace and supplication has not been poured out upon us! Oh, how many are there of this description, if properly examined! How few among those who bare the name of christians, are *called* from darkness to the marvellous light of the gospel of God? How few are justified! born again! sanctified and renewed after the image of God! How few show forth the fruits of the Spirit, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance! How few, who, when they pray, pray in humility of heart, with true devotion, with zeal and fervor, in faith and with importunity! How few upon whom the spirit of supplication is poured out! But whosoever has not this spirit is in the highest degree unhappy, for he who has not the Spirit of Christ, is none of his; he has no interest in him, nor in the benefits of grace purchased by him. He can never abide the presence of an angry God; for only the blood of Jesus Christ, and the gracious influences of his Holy Spirit, can appease the wrath of an angry God.

My dear friends, let us therefore, unceasingly seek these blessings; let us pray to God without ceasing, that the Spirit of grace and supplication, may be poured out upon us. If we take so much pains to obtain the things of this world, why should we not endeavor to become partakers of this Spirit, with whom, and through whom we receive all that is necessary and profitable both as to body and soul. He converts us, he purifies us from the works of darkness, he regenerates us to a, living hope. Why then should we not seek why should we not strive with all our powers, to become partakers thereof? If we fall into great tribulations —into strong temptations, so that we tremble and fear, weep and lament, he assists us: as a Comforter he says unto us with the most welcome voice, "Be of good cheer, *my son, my daughter*, thy *sins* are *forgiven thee!*" "Weep no more, for behold the Lion of the tribe of Juda, has conquered." If we are distressed, he lifts us up, he leads us heaven-ward, and stimulates us to seek what is above, that our walk may be in heaven. Should we fall into doubts, not knowing whether we are in the favor of God; then *he gives* our *spirit witness*, that we are the *children* of *God.*" He seals us unto the day of our redemption. He teaches us how and what to pray for. He excites us to prayer, yea, he prays with and in us, and makes intercession for us, with groanings that cannot be uttered.

Arise, then, my dear friends, and let us exert all our bodily and spiritual powers, to become partakers of the Spirit of grace and supplication! But hear how we are to proceed: we must be unanimous! For when the disciples of Jesus, were assembled together, the Holy Ghost was poured out upon them! We must hear and read, the word of God attentively; for as many as heard the word gladly, received the Holy Ghost. Acts. We must pray without ceasing; we must feel *deeply contrite*, on account of our sins, and heartily repent of them; otherwise we cannot become partakers of this Spirit. The Holy Ghost is a Comforter, and is only given unto those, who need comfort: hence, saith Peter to the Jews, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the re-

mission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts ii. Finally, we must conduct ourselves as members of the spiritual house of David, as inhabitants of the spiritual Jerusalem; as members of the true church of Jesus, as subjects of his kingdom. Our *walk*, our *citizenship* must not be on earth, but in heaven; we must empty our hearts of every thing earthly, we must renounce all below, and direct our affections thither where Jesus is.

If we do this, the spirit of prayer and of supplication, shall be poured out upon us. He shall then enlighten our understanding, sanctify our will, and purify our affections. If we are *weak*, he will *help us;* if we are mourning, he will comfort us, he will render our prayers acceptable unto God, and give us the assurance that our prayers are heard. He will preserve us in faith, by the power of God unto salvation, and lead us thither where our inheritance is, even to the heavenly Jerusalem; where we shall ascribe praise, honor, and glory, unto God our Father, unto Jesus our Saviour, and unto the Holy Ghost, our Sanctifier, for ever and ever! AMEN.

SERMON X.

GALATIANS, CHAP. V. V. 22.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love."

INTRODUCTION.

Of all the perfections and virtues of God, by which he reveals himself unto his creatures; but especially unto the children of men, I say of all these perfections, there is none, more consoling, more acceptable, and more enlivening, than the *love* of God. For what are his eternity, his omniscence, his omnipresence, and his holiness, without his *love?* Would not man—fallen, sinful man, flee his presence? Would not his life, be a continued hell? Would he not be eternally separated from his fellowship? What were his omnipresence, and justice without his love? Would not man be in the greatest dread on account of his justice? What could he expect, but eternal damnation? And would he love him in sincerity? Would he not have a constant aversion to God? It is therefore, the *love of God*, that makes all his other perfections and virtues acceptable, delightful and quickening to man. Love comprehends goodness, patience, and long-suffering, in his not dealing with man according to his merits, but at all times, granting him time and space for repentance, and operating on his soul, by his Spirit, and not executing his judgments upon him, until he despises and rejects his goodness. His love also comprehends, his inexpressible grace and mercies, whereby he receives man in the Son of his love, and if he does not obstinately reject his mercies, he delivers him, from every evil and makes him completely happy. His love comprehends also his inexpressible kindness, according to which he graciously condescends to those

who are in fellowship with him; dealing with them, as one friend with another, as a tender father toward his children, his beloved sons and daughters.

Love is the brightest, and most glorious beam of the Divine Image, in which man was originally created; and, it was the bases of primitive perfection, that man not only loved God, as his Creator and Benefactor, supremely, but also himself, and other creatures in God. If now, by virtue of the love of God, his image, which he lost by sin, be again restored into his soul, in the new birth; then, the bright beams of love break forth in the most glowing manner to God, and a general, and cordial love, is exercised also toward mankind, and especially, toward those, who with us, love the Lord. Love is therefore, the principal property of those who are born from above, of water and of the Spirit. Paul teaches this plainly, not only in many other parts of scripture, but also in the words of the text.

Connection.—After he had noticed in the three preceding verses, the works of the flesh,—the works of carnal and unregenerated man, he then notices the fruits which are manifested by him, who has passed from a state of nature, into the life of the Spirit, by being born again; and among all these fruits, he mentions love, as the most prominent. "*But the fruit of the Spirit is love.*" Let us then notice,

Division I. In what the love of a regenerated person consists, and to whom it extends; and,

II. Whence is its origin.

First part.—Love in general, is a passion of the human will, which incline it to this or that object, to this or that person or thing, in which we expect to find satisfaction or pleasure. And hence, it has different degrees. It consists either in this, that we have a strong inclination for that which we love, or that we have a pleasure in the enjoyment thereof; or, that we are inclined to do that, and actually do that which agrees with, and is acceptable to the object of our love.

This general description of love, in its different degrees, opens the way for us plainly to see in what the love of a regenerated person, or a christian consists, and to whom it extends.

True christian love has three objects to which it extends. God, our fellow man, and ourselves. The love toward God, as it is in the heart of a christian, is a continual and actual desire after him as the chief good, to be united with him, and after that union, to please him, and to find rest and satisfaction in him.

As soon as man, after having the eyes of his understanding fully enlightened, by the light of God, learns to know God, and himself, in a living and saving manner, and sees his own vanity and that of every other creature, and discovers in God, the only chief good, by whom alone the affections of his soul can be perfectly satisfied, and his happiness can be made to endure for ever; so soon, are the first sparks of the true and pure love of God implanted in the soul. Man has a cordial and an ardent desire, that God, the chief and most perfect good, would, out of mere grace and for Christ's sake, impart himself to him, and adopt him into union and fellowship with himself. It is written, "Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul." Psalm xxv. 1. And the further a person advances, the closer he attains to the mark and object of his wishes; the more he learns to know God, in his ways and works,—the more he looks upon him in Christ, the stronger will be the sparks of the true and pure love of God in him. The soul willingly renounces others and readily denies and forgets every other thing, if it is only admitted into the union and communion of eternal and merciful *love*.

All this, and much more, takes place, in the soul, while engaged in seeking the highest and most desirable good, and before it has entered into a full union, and fellowship, therewith. But when this takes place and a full assurance thereof, is felt in the soul; then the fire of love,—of pure and undefiled love, breaks forth as it were, in flames towards God. For as soon as the oil of the Holy Spirit, who gives this assurance, is poured upon the fire, which was before covered as it

were with ashes, then there is nothing but fire of pure love in the soul. Here he surrenders himself to God; he loves God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his mind and with all his powers, according to the exhortation of the Saviour. Matt. 22. There is nothing more pertaining to, or in man, which he calls his own; for he has surrendered all his powers unto God, even the inmost powers and faculties of the soul. God is loved above every thing, not only in this world, but in heaven. If such an one has but him, then he desires none besides him, in heaven and on earth. Psalm lxxiii. 25. "It is love which is as strong as death, its jealousy is as cruel as the grave, the coals thereof, as coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame, many waters cannot quench it, neither can the floods drown it." Cant. 8. This love exceeds that toward a father, a mother, a son and daughter, wife and children, brother and sister, who are to be loved less than God. Matt. x. 37. This is the reason why we strive to live to please God, that we conform in all things, in *all* our *thoughts*, *words*, and *actions*, to his most holy will. "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments." 1 John v. 3. And the Saviour saith, "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments." John xiv. 15. "If a man love me, he will keep my words." xxiii. Hence, it may be remarked, that this love increases from time to time. For the more a person dies unto himself and the creature, in the progress of true holiness; the closer he enters into fellowship with God, and the closer is he united with him by faith in Christ: the purer, the more undefiled will this love be, and the more fervently will we seek to be acceptable and pleasing to God, in Christ Jesus. There still remains at all times, a desire in the soul, for a closer fellowship,—for a closer union with God, which is not fully satisfied until it is wholly swallowed up in eternity, in the stream of the love of God; and until it be engaged with nothing besides. And it is even here at times so strong, that the soul becomes sick for love. Cant. ii. 5; and either earnestly desires after a closer union with God, or refreshings in tribulations, in temptations and trials, when the Lord as it were,

hides his presence. For in the love of God, and Jesus only, the soul finds true peace and perfect contentment. What can create more peace and contentment, than that the soul knows itself to be in possession of the chief good, if it have fellowship, and is united with him, who is a God, of the most perfect happiness? What can create more peace and contentment, than submiting ourselves to infinite love? Indeed, in this consists the whole happiness of the soul, for it here enjoys an antepast of the heavenly glories in the true and pure love of God. For it already enjoys the first fruits of heaven, while here on earth.

But a soul that loves God in sincerity, also loves every thing that is of God; all his creatures, in so far as it is compatible, with the pure love of God. This embraces mankind in general, whereby a soul that loves God, according to the general love of God, directs its love towards all. God so loves all mankind in general, that he provides for them, both as to body and soul. 1. The love to our neighbor, or toward all mankind, as it is practised by one that loves God, consists in this, that he strives to promote the welfare, and happiness of all mankind, with all his powers, and as much as possible, both as to body and soul. But as much as the soul excels the body, so much more does the design of general love, toward all mankind, of a soul loving God, which is directed to the welfare and happiness of their souls, exceed all other objects. Every christian seeks to promote the conversion of each, yet at all times, with the necessary prudence recommended by the Saviour, to admonish and reprove them in due season, and avoiding carefully every thing calculated to deter others from doing good. The general love toward all, and every individual of a christian, seeks, not only in general to prevent every harm, both as to body and soul, but on the other hand, to promote his welfare and happiness, and is also charitable in words and deeds. From this love, even enemies are not excluded, of whom the blessed Saviour expressly says, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them who despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be

the children of your Father who is in heaven." Matt. v. 44, 45. For where this general love is not found in the soul, there is also no love of God, consequently no conversion, but such an one is yet in a state of nature. And if it is even implanted in the heart, by virtue of the love of God, but if man makes every kind of exceptions, whether in regard to religion, or any thing else, he either stands not in full adoption, with God, or he is under the influence of prejudices, which are hurtful to him, and calculated to prevent a closer union with God, who is the *eternal love*, which is the reason why that general love toward each and every individual is not pure and genuine.

There is another species of love toward our neighbor, proceeding from a soul-loving God. It is that love, which extends to those, who travel with it in the same way,—the way to the heavenly Zion, and in a word, includes all those, who love the Lord in sincerity, whether they are just commencing to cordially desire after, or are in actual union with the *chief good*, or have made considerable advancement in the divine communion. This is the *special brotherly love*, of which the apostles say so much in their Epistles, and which was a glorious jewel among the primitive christians. When one assists the other, as much as possible, in things that pertain to the body, and endeavors especially, to instruct, encourage, exhort, comfort, strengthen and edify each other. Peter therefore, exhorts the faithful saying, "Purify your souls, in obeying the truth, through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another with a pure heart fervently." 1 Pet. i. 22. And, indeed Paul writes, "But as touching brotherly love, ye need not that I write unto you, for ye yourselves are taught of God, to love one another." 1 Thess. iv. 9. For this is implanted in the soul, in the beginning of conversion, and especially in the new birth, so that we cannot but love those cordially, who love God. Though human infirmities may sometimes even in those that have received grace, restrict the external operations of this love, yet it is impossible to continue long thus; but love appears again more fervent, and can never be altogether suppressed.

For it cannot, by virtue of pure love to God in the new birth, be otherwise. With this, the love of ourselves, is very intimately connected: for the Saviour saith, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." Matt. xxii. 39. Self-love is universal; it is a natural instinct in all, *to be happy*. But it is perverted, if a person makes *himself* the sole object of his love, and seeks only his own gain, honor and pleasure. But in the soul that has received grace, where this love is found, it consists in this, that it seeks to promote its own eternal welfare and desires to live to the honor and good pleasure of God. This is sanctified *self-love*, that proceeds from love to God, as well as love toward our neighbor, and according to which, a christian's soul flows out in love toward his fellow-men. This is the only kind of *self-love*, in which man can indulge with acceptance in the sight of God.

Second part.—But in this, all glorying in the flesh must be avoided, and every thing must be sought in the Lord, whence it must be expected: wherefore the apostle expressly notices love to be of the Spirit; he says, "the fruit of the Spirit is love."

The word *spirit* may be understood in a two-fold sense, which however amounts to the same thing. We may understand, by the spirit, the third person of the Trinity, the *Holy Ghost*, or we may also consider the spirit as the *regenerated principle of man*, which, as already said, amounts to the same. For it is the Holy Ghost, by his special influences that effects the conversion of man, and who actually regenerates, sanctifies, and renews him after the image of God: And the regenerated principle in man, consists in nothing else, than in a powerful indwelling of the Spirit of God, in the soul, whereby he cleanses it from the uncleanness and filth of sin, by virtue of the blood of Christ, and makes it meet for happiness. Here then is love, the love of God! Universal love! And brotherly love, the "fruit of the Spirit."

For by nature, man is prone both to hate God, and his neighbor. The natural man is carnally minded, and the carnal mind is enmity against God." Rom. viii. Hence, says the same apostle, of himself, and all natural men,

"For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another." Tit. iii. 3. So that the natural man has neither love toward God, nor toward his neighbor, nor toward himself inasmuch as he works out his own destruction.

But grace changes a man as to all this; and it is the Holy Ghost, who, with his powerful operations, from time to time works in the soul, in such a manner as to produce in it a disposition of love toward God, toward his neighbor, and consequently toward himself. And, it is of course a work which exists only in a soul regenerated, by the Spirit of God, or of a soul brought to this state by him. It is a fruit of the first powerful workings of the Spirit, in the soul of man. It is the fruit, and necessary consequence of the new birth. For as little as a good healthy tree can be without fruit, of its kind, but brings it forth by virtue of sap in it, according to God's counsel and providence; so little can a christian, a true child of God, be without the fruit of pure and undefiled love toward God and his neighbor. And this, by virtue of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, in his soul, and the regeneration wrought by him.

APPLICATION.

Now think you not, my friends, that christianity is a glorious thing? Is it not a glorious thing, where it has been wrought in the soul by virtue of the new birth, through the Holy Ghost? Surely, if the world were filled with christians, it would be a Paradise! How would men love one another, by virtue of pure love to God! How would each seek to promote the welfare and happiness of his fellow-man! Then those infernal furies, envy, hatred, wrath, strife, discord and the like, would be compelled to return into the dark abyss to their father, the devil, whence they had their origin! Love alone would reign upon earth, as queen of the children of men. How happy are they in whom the Spirit has wrought such an amiable disposition! Those of a truth, have a heaven within them here while on earth! How happy the country, the city, the town, or

congregation, in which there are many such souls! For such are the pillars of society; they are the bulwark of a country, the walls and towers of a city, and the right hand of a congregation. Say it not again, oh, men of the world! that christianity is morose, as you have hitherto considered it, or that it makes mankind enemies to each other. No! you deceive yourselves, for it is not so; but because christians do no more conform to the world, and take part in your sinful works, but flee every opportunity thereto; this is the reason why you esteem them gloomy; but if you would consider how heartily they are concerned about you, and how they pray for the happiness of your souls, you would judge otherwise.

It is lamentable, however, that the number is so small, who manifest the fruit of the Spirit. Let us look upon the multitude; let us examine the conduct and actions of the greater part of men, and oh, what an unchristian —what an uncharitable condition of things do we find every where! Love has fled to its native birth-place, heaven, and is no more upon earth! at least it is wanting in many hearts. Every where you see, hear, and find nothing but envy, hatred, wrath, strife, discord, chiding, blaspheming, contumely, reviling, backbiting, fighting, brawling, and the like, more fruits of the Prince of Darkness. One man would willingly lose an eye, if the other only had none! One man, as it were, is the other's devil. Nay, even where there is some appearance of love, it is not true love, but it is love founded on selfish principles, and which extends no farther than the gratification of *self*. If two or three come together, this one or another is defamed, and in a few minutes, even among themselves, they return each other the same compliment. It is abominable! It makes one shudder to think how often they imprecate upon each other, thunder, devil and damnation! Righteous God! if things were to go according to the imprecations of men, this world would soon be depopulated, and the greater part would be in hell! To requite evil for evil, curse for curse, and to inveigh against each other, is very common, and love prevails but little. But no wonder! For where there is no love to God, there can be no

love to our neighbor. Would nominal love suffice, then we could say of all, that they love God; but when we examine into the ground of their professed love to God, it is then we find as little of it as there is love to our neighbor. But very few acknowledge him as the chief good! There is no true, no cordial desire after him as such. There is no ardent desire to be united with *him* by faith in Christ; and hence, nothing is done according to his pleasure. There is no pleasure in doing his *will*—every desire, every affection, is placed upon the things of this world, in which they seek peace, satisfaction and contentment. All are bent upon how to indulge their sinful lusts and desires, and how to make themselves hateful toward God. But here, also, it is no wonder that the love of God abounds so little. How shall, and how can it be, where the Spirit of God is not found? Where there is no new birth? No, it lays not on the part of the Spirit of God; for he knocketh at every heart; he convinces here one, and there another, but it lays altogether on the part of sinful man, who resists him, and does not give place to him in his heart.

Oh! examine yourselves, therefore, one and all of *you*, who are at present in the presence of Almighty God. I mean all of *you*, who are yet in your depravity, and who are enemies of God, and of one another; or who have little or no love toward God or toward your neighbor in you! I pray you to consider the condition in which you are! Can you hate *him!* Can you be enemies to *him*, who is Eternal *Love* itself? God, to whom you are so much under obligations; the gracious God, who has hitherto exercised such a special indulgence toward you; the *merciful God*, who would have you eternally happy, and has knocked so repeatedly at your hearts, and who has so faithfully called you unto repentance! Is it possible, oh children of men! Can you still hate him? When will you begin to love him? When will you direct your desires and affections toward him? When will you seek your happiness and peace in him, in being united with him, as the *Chief Good?* Will you delay till death and eternity overtake you? Then it will be too late! Therefore, arise! and give the Spirit of grace place within you! Follow his

convictions, and suffer yourselves to be born again by his influence. You will then be translated out of your unhappy state of nature, into the blessed state of grace, and into such a state of mind, as to love God supremely, and your neighbor as yourselves. The love of God will be shed abroad in your souls! You will be preserved by the Spirit, and sealed unto the day of redemption. Nay, with Paul, you may triumphantly exclaim: "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." AMEN.

SERMON XI.

PSALM, CHAP. XXIV, V. 15.

The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.

INTRODUCTION.

Although the most pious children of God, as well as others, frequently fall into the greatest distresses, tribulations and temptations, and must likewise endure their share of the common adversities of life; yet herein, they have the advantage of other mortals, not only that they in time of need, pray to God with confidence; but they have the assurance that their prayers shall be heard, and answered.

That all, in general, are subject to a thousand adverse casualties; that some especially, must groan under extraordinary heavy burdens, calamities and tribulations, none will deny; and you, my friends, have yourselves experienced this in a greater or less degree, or have yet to experience it; for this is the sad consequence of sin, and therefore the general lot of mortals. Accordingly, the most devout children of God, fall not unfrequently into distresses, tribulations and temptations; nay, that they are, in some cases, more frequently afflicted than others, is a truth which needs no series of argument to prove. Daily experience, as well as the unerring word of God, afford you examples and assurances sufficiently, as to the fact, "That we must, through much tribulation, enter into the kingdom of God" Acts xiv. That we must suffer with Christ, if we desire to be glorified with him. Rom. viii. All which is fully confirmed by such examples as Jacob, David, Daniel, and many others. How frequently, must not this or that

faithful child of God, exclaim with Asaph, and say, "Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency; for all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning." Psalm lxxiii. And how often must they not learn by experience, with Solomon, that "the righteous must suffer with the wicked, and the upright, as the brutish man."

But, although they have to endure much tribulation in Christ, yet shall they be the more richly comforted; and although they are more frequently and more generally afflicted than others, they still have this prerogative above others, that they know whither to flee in time of distress, and whence to await help and assistance with an assured confidence of success. "Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains: truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel." Jer. iii. And it is to him, to whom believers turn in prayer, and when in tribulation they seek him; when he chastens them they cry unto him anxiously; and they can do it with the more assurance and confidence, because he who is in heaven has given them the most precious assurance, that he would be ever mindful of them, that he, with a strong arm and mighty hand, would "redeem them if they would call on him in the day of trouble." A similar consoling promise is made to us, by the Spirit of God, in the words of the text, which I have read on the present occasion.

Connection.—The sacred poet, the royal prophet David, through whom the Spirit of God is here speaking, commences the Psalm from which we have taken the text, with the holy resolution, "I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall be continually in my mouth; my soul shall make her boast in the Lord; the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. O! magnify the Lord with me, saith he unto them, and let us exalt his name together. And then, he likewise introduces the motives that encouraged and incited him to the praise of God, in appealing to his own experience, and to examples, he had seen and heard of in others; which had affected him so strikingly, that his soul was roused into raptures, and he was constrained to exclaim, in ho-

ly ecstacy, "O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him!" In consideration of this, he commends unto all the saints of God, to *fear him* the *more*, because they should then never have cause to complain for want; and in order for man to know what constitutes the true fear of God, he also mentions some of the most important or essential things to be observed, or to be omitted. "Keep thy tongue," says he, "from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it." In order to enforce this the more, he avails himself of several motives, referring to the faithful and paternal care of the Lord over his people; over those who fear him with filial fear; and he also refers to the righteous judgments of God toward the ungodly. A motive of the first kind, is the one contained in the words of my text, where he says, "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers."

Now, my friends! you may easily comprehend what is the essential *import* and the proper *design* of these *words*. Herein, in a special manner, are represented:

CONTENTS.—*The special Providence of God over his people, and his readiness to assist and deliver them out of their adversities, tribulations and temptations, provided they turn to him with prayer and supplication.* And they are introduced as a motive to encourage all men in general, and more especially the pious and believing, to exercise a true and filial fear of God, in order that they may derive comfort from his care, and assistance in time of distress and need.

This, my friends, is the essential import, and special design, of the words of my text. I will now proceed to a more minute consideration of them, and in doing this I will direct your attention to the following particulars:

DIVISION I. I will describe the persons, in relation to whom the words of the text are spoken, as also a certain action, which is ascribed to them.

II. I will present, in a clear light, the comfort and dealings of God toward them.

The persons whom I have to describe in considering the first part of the text, are called *the righteous.* "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers."

Part first.—Righteous, my friends, is an expression of frequent occurrence, in the scriptures of the Old and New Testament, and very frequently alludes to a judicial act; and thus it may either be applied to the judge or to the defendant. The judge is *righteous* if he passes his sentence, and actually executes it, according to law and justice. In this sense of the word, the Lord God is frequently called *righteous,* in his most holy word. For it is written, "The Lord is righteous and loveth righteousness." Psalm xi. He is a righteous judge. Hence Bildad asked the Shuhite, the friend of Job, "Doth God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert justice, *(righteousness?)*" Job viii. Jeremiah calls him "a judge that judgeth righteously and that tries the reins and hearts." Jer. xi. But Paul plainly declares that "the ungodly and impenitent treasure up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds." Rom. ii. 6. Thus is the judge *righteous.* The defendant, on the other hand, is one who is found innocent and blameless. The defendant may either be acquitted and acknowledged innocent by his own, or his acquired righteousness, or by the righteousness of another, imputed unto him. In the first case, namely, by an acquired righteousness of his own, no man living can be considered as righteous before God. Psalm cxliii. Since the fall of man, "There is none righteous, no not one; there is none that understandeth; there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way; they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Rom. iii. "And if man would contend with God he could not answer him one of a thousand." And all are constrained to exclaim, "If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O LORD, who shall stand?" Hence, when certain persons are called righteous in scripture, we must look for another, a foreign or an imputed righteousness,

and this is none other than the righteousness produced by perfect obedience, and the precious merits of Jesus Christ, by whom, and of whom believers have at all times acquired their righteousness before God. Thus, it is said, by the Spirit of prophecy, that in him, "In the LORD, the Messiah, shall all the seed of Israel be justified." Isa. xlv. "I rejoice, saith the church, of him; I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness." Isa lxi. And if we desire to hear the testimony of the New Testament, let us but read what Paul writes in his Epistle to the Romans, and we shall be fully convinced of this, without considering any other testimonies.

Therefore, the children of God, are called righteous; because, they are acquitted of all guilt and punishment of sin, and are accounted innocent, as though they had never sinned, but fulfilled all obedience to the Divine Law; but not as being innocent of themselves, or as having themselves rendered satisfaction for their trespasses and sins; their crimes and transgressions; but only for Jesus their surety's sake, who has in their stead, rendered perfect obedience to the Divine Law, by suffering the punishment due to sin; and who through faith, has bestowed *them* his righteousness, and imputed it unto them, as though it were their own. Hence, they are considered as innocent and righteous before God, and as though they had never sinned, but had performed that perfect obedience, which Christ rendered for them. The children of God, are moreover called righteous, on account of the glorious and blessed fruits which they manifest, as justified by the blood of Christ, since they now are found "perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord,"—not living any more unto themselves, but living unto God in Christ Jesus, "and who let not sin reign in their mortal bodies, neither do they yield their members as instruments of righteousness unto sin: but yield themselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and their members as instruments of righteousness unto God." Rom. vi.

Thus my friends are the persons constituted, whom the sacred poet represents as special objects of the care

of the Most High; but before I proceed further, I have to represent one of their particular actions to your minds, by virtue of which, they become objects of the special assistance and aid of the Lord their God. The regal prophet ascribes *prayer* unto them: "*his ears are open unto their cry*," *(prayer.)*

In the original, my friends, there is a word used which signifies *anxious calling and crying*. You know yourselves, that that takes place only with those, who find themselves in great distress, or in evident danger. They ardently desire help, and they make this known by crying aloud and anxiously. Thus did the children of Israel groan and sigh by reason of their bondage. Exod. 2. And Job lamented in his distress, "Behold, I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard: I cry aloud, but there is no judgment." Job xix. Hence it is, that we find this expression frequently employed in sacred scripture; it speaks of the prayer of the children of God, addressed to him, in their adversities and tribulations, for aid and assistance. Thus it is said of the prophet Jonah, "that he cried by reason of his afflictions, unto the Lord his God out of the whale's belly." And here in the text the expression occurs in the same sense, where speaking of the *calling* and *crying* of the righteous; and as may easily be conceived, it is used to show that they cry in their great distress, unto the Lord for help.

I will but briefly notice the various and sad casualities to which the children of God are more subject than others; and you will then, readily be convinced, how solemn the reasons are, why they cry so very earnestly at times, unto the Almighty for help. They are at all times confronted by a formidable, and mighty host of enemies, that frequently assault them furiously, and are bent upon destroying them. The devil, that miscreant, and arch enemy of the pious, "goeth about, like a roaring Lion, seeking to devour them." 1 Pet. v. 8. The world a faithful servant of the prince of darkness, first attempts to allure them, by offering them riches, honor and glory, but if the world does not succeed in this, they then pour streams of persecutions out on them; so much so, "that the waters come up upon their

souls." Psalm lxix. "Come," say the children of the world, "let us cut them off, that the remembrance of their name be no more." Psalm lxxxiii. Their common afflictions are, tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril and sword, so that Paul complained in his day, saying, "We are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." Rom. viii. Yea, their flesh and blood unite with the outward enemy, and contend against the Spirit. Gal. v. Sometimes the Lord for wise purposes, suffers a David, to commit adultery, and to shed innocent blood, and a wise and intelligent Solomon, to fall into idolatry; and a Peter to deny his Lord and Master. Now I will admit, that he suffers his people, to fall into this, or that sin, in order to convince them of their own frailty, and to keep them in humility, and to render his grace the more obviously necessary; but when this happens, then do they find themselves, in lamentable circumstances, for the enemies of their souls, take new courage, and rush simultaneously upon them with all their power, and they are also exceedingly punished, by an *accusing conscience*, which presents to them their digressions from the path of duty, in a fearful aspect, and upbraids them so severely, that they have no rest, neither day or night, but they "wither away, and become old by reason of mourning."

What will they do in such circumstances? They of themselves are too impotent, successfully to withstand the mighty enemies of their souls; and they are well convinced of this, and hence are not a little alarmed; nay, they frequently sink into the greatest agonies; so that they cry aloud, and lamentably with David, "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men have made me afraid. "The sorrows of hell compassed me about, the snares of death overpower me." Psalm xviii. In the mean time they know, that, "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: that if the righteous runneth into it, that he is then safe." Prov. xviii. And since they are convinced of this, they run thereunto with speed, turn unto the Almighty in prayer and supplication, and pray with David, "Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer. From the

end of the earth, will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the rock that is higher than I." Ps. lxi: and with the church, "Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort." Psalm lxxi. And if they have been overcome through the weakness of the flesh, or have, by divine permission fallen into this or that sin, they will acknowledge and confess their short-comings; they will repent of them, they will pray and cry unto God, to let grace pass for judgment, and that he for Christ's sake, would in mercy, pardon them. This is a duty, which is not only always incumbent on them, but is the only true means, of which they have to avail themselves, in all their adversities and distresses, if they do by any means desire to rejoice in the help of God. A duty which has on this account, been inculcated by the blessed Saviour, not only as necessary, but also as being salutary: "Ask, saith he, and it shall be given unto you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Matt. 7. And this is not less, frequently recommended by the apostles: hear what Paul saith to the believing Hebrews, "Let us therefore come boldy unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Heb. iv. But this must be done in faith, if it is to be acceptable unto God. This is what our Lord commands, when he saith, "All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer believing, ye shall receive." Matt. xxi. At another place he explains himself more plainly, when he saith, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you," John xvi. And when the children of God, do this with a becoming zeal, and continue steadfast therein, then they may live in the assurance, that their prayers, their calling and crying will be heard, inasmuch as the Lord never said unto the seed of Jacob, seek ye my face in vain; but much more "the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous availeth much." And of this, they are also assured in the sequel of my text, "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their cries."

Second part.—My friends, when such expressions occur in Holy writ, by which such things are ascribed

to God, as *eyes* and *ears*, we must not understand them literally, but figuratively. For God is a most perfect and invisible being, and whom we must never imagine to have eyes, hands, and feet, and the like, because he partakes of nothing corporeal; but whenever such expressions occur in the word of God, they are only used with a view thereby to be adapted to the finite understanding of man, to whom the being of God is incomprehensible, and in order by such representations, to render God, in some measure, comprehensible. With this view, are eyes here ascribed to God, as well as in many other parts of holy writ, to represent his various, and different dealings among his creatures the more clearly, and impressively. At one place it has reference to his wrath and rigor, to his righteous judgment, which he executes upon the ungodly; thus the Lord threatens ungodly and rebellious Israel. He saith, "Mine *eye* shall not spare thee, neither will I have pity: but I will recompense thy ways upon thee, and thine abominations shall be in the midst of thee; and ye shall know that I am the Lord." Ez. vii. And again, "And I will set my eyes upon them for evil, and not for good." Amos ix. And in other parts of the scripture where eyes are ascribed figuratively to God the Lord, his *omniscience* is represented; for it is written, The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD's throne is in heaven; his eyes behold: his eye-lids try the children of men." Psalm xi. "For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings." Job. xxxiv. And in other parts of scripture they represent his providence in regard to the good and evil; in regard to good, in it is comprehended his paternal favor, love, grace and blessings unto every individual, but more especially, to his people. Thus it is said of the land of Canaan, "A land which the Lord thy God careth for; the eyes of the Lord thy God, are always upon it from the beginning of the year, even unto the end of the year." David assures us also, that "The eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; to deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine." Psalm xxxiii. Here his eye is spoken of, both in relation to the deal-

ings of the Divine Being, in regard to his intelligent creatures, and in particular, in regard to his people. You, my friends, may easily therefore infer, what David means, when he saith, "*That the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous.*" He here assures all pious and God-fearing souls, that the Lord is their God, their omnipresent God is always present with them every where, and in a special manner: that he is an omniscient God, that he knows all their rising up and lying down, all their trials and difficulties; that his grace and love toward them, are so ardent and fervent, that he will not only bless them abundantly, in things spiritual, but also in things temporal, so that they shall never want; and that he will finally deliver them, out of their trials and sufferings, so that they have reason to rejoice in his goodness, and to praise and glorify his holy name. My friends, do you desire to be instructed more minutely herein? I pray you, to pay proper attention to the ways and dealings of God from time to time, towards his people, and you will discover more than I am able to tell you. The providence of God indeed extends to all his creatures, without exception; his all-seeing eye, is directed upon all his creatures, but especially upon mankind, as his intelligent creatures; and a person who is a close observer of the ways and dealings of God, will make such discoveries, that he will with astonishment exclaim, "O God, what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" Psalm viii. Arise you who are devout, and who fear God, behold the High and Lofty One, as a reconciled, covenant God in Christ Jesus! With *you*, he is ever present, in a special manner, in grace and love, as your helper and protector. It is his grace, his inexpressible love, according to which, he elected you as his own, before the foundation of the word; and here in time, translated you from the state of nature, into a state of grace, and out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light, and justified you in the blood of Christ, and adopted you as his children: and it is only by his grace, that you can walk worthy of your vocation, and follow true holiness, and stand fast therein. And were he for a single moment to

withdraw his eye from you, you would again fall into your natural state; "but he delivers your soul from death, and keeps your feet from falling." By his Spirit "he leads you in a plain path." "He will hold you by your right hand, and direct your path by his word" He takes the most special care of you, he looks upon your rising up and lying down, and he gives you an assurance, by continually conferring favors upon you, that your situation is known unto him: for unto the angel of the church at Ephesus, he saith, "I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: and hast borne, and hast patience and for my name's sake has labored, and hast not fainted," Rev. ii. Also in temporal things he does not let you suffer, though you should not have things in abundance, still you have what is necessary for bodily support; and sooner must the meal in the barrel, and the oil in the cruse be miraculously increased, and the ravens feed Elijah, than the *Lord* fail of his promises. He protects you as the apple of his eye, "for he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye." If you enter into distress, tribulation, and temptations he assures you, that these are laid upon you for your good. "I know, saith he to the angel of the church at Smyrna, your tribulation and works." Yea, that he is ready either to mitigate your sufferings, or to deliver you from them, if you turn to him in prayer, *for his ears are open to your cry.*

My friends, this expression is also to be figuratively understood. By the organ of hearing, we become familiarly acquainted with this or that thing; hence, we have to understand, by the ears ascribed to the LORD, nothing else than his omniscience, but these are in a special manner, ascribed to him, partly in regard to the prayer and supplication of the pious, and partly in regard to the sins of the ungodly. In regard to the sins of the ungodly, we have to understand by the *ears*, that God knows their sins; or, as touching their prayer, if it can be called such, that his ears are described as being deaf, closed and shut, and to signify thereby, as they do not pray by faith on the Lord Jesus, nor according to his

most holy will, that it is an abomination to him, and he also gives us to understand that his displeasure is directed toward them, that he denies them their wishes and desires, because they are sinful. But in regard to the prayer and supplication of the pious, the ears which are figuratively ascribed to the LORD, signify, not only that he knows all things, and hears all things, but also his favors, his affections, his willingness and readiness to hear their prayers, and to give unto them what they ask for, by faith in the name of Jesus Christ, and according to his most holy will; *and these* are noticed as *open ears.*

Experience, my friends, is to us, in this case, a perfect, and an approved witness, and its testimony is wholly incontrovertible. If the devout, the pious, turn unto God by prayer and faith, in their distress, in their tribulations and temptations, if they call unto him for aid, assistance and deliverance; when he has sufficiently proved their patience and steadfastness in tribulation and sufferings, he sends them never-failing help, and delivers them out of all their trials. In contending against the enemies of their salvation—the devil, the world, and their natural depravity, God is always ready to assist them, and contends for them, although they may not observe his invisible presence. "He takes hold of the shield and buckler, in order to help them; he also draws out the spear to defend them against their persecutors; he saith unto their souls, *I am your salvation.*" "He brings them out of the horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and sets their feet upon a rock." "When they pass through waters, he will be with them; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow them; when they walk through the fire, they shall not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon them." "He will redeem them from the hands of the wicked." "He will deliver them from the snare of the fowler," and with *him* they will overcome the wicked one, the world, their own flesh and blood; they will conquor and gain the victory by his grace and assistance. If they have committed any sin, by reason of the weakness of the flesh; if they have fallen into this or that sin, if they call and cry unto him, if they acknowledge

and confess their faults, and are penitent, he will lift his reconciled countenance upon them in grace, and suffer them to hear the acceptable words, "I have pardoned; be of good cheer my son; my daughter thy sins be forgiven thee." 2 Sam. xii. Matt. ix.

APPLICATION.

And now, my friends, judge ye whether this is not one of the most urgent motives, that the man, according to God's own heart, could avail himself of, particularly to encourage the pious, to cultivate the filial fear of God; judge, whether we have not reason, and whether for our own sakes, we are not bound to discharge all the duties of godliness with diligence. I am certain that your own hearts, yea, your consciences will admit it, without the least contradiction. It is, indeed, a sad consequence of sin, that we are subjected, to innumerable adversities, that this or that brother, has to suffer innumerable tribulations and calamities; and how unhappy are we in such cases, if the eyes of the Lord are not, in a special manner, upon us, if we have not yet, by the grace of God, come out of the kingdom of darkness, into the kingdom of light; but yet remain in our natural depravity. Oh! whence can we, then, have comfort! Who will bear our cross with us? Who will help, and deliver us, out of our afflictions? But happy are we, if we have, as the justified, by the blood of Jesus, God always before our eyes; fear *him filially*, and live and act according to his most holy will; if our sufferings are ever so great, let them be innumerable, in all these, we can be of good cheer and comfort; because he who has laid these things upon us, helps us to bear them; he assists us; he strengthens us; when we cry and call upon *him*, *he* will incline his ears unto our prayers, and will deliver us out of all our distresses; whereas, if we do evil, he will turn away his countenance from us; his ears will be stopped to our prayers, and will surely afford us no audience. Should not this induce us to keep our tongue from speaking evil, and our lips from uttering falsehood? Should we not thereby be constrained to cease doing evil, and learn to do

well—to seek peace, and follow it? By all means! my friends, by all means, we should! And it is to be lamented, that it is not the case. Godliness has the "promise of *this* and the *life to come.*" Those who practice true godliness shall never come to want. "The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers." As charming as these things are, even so few among the children of men, really admire them. Here it may be said, "Help, LORD, for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men? Many live as though there were no God in heaven, who takes cognizance of their doings, even their rising up, and their lying down! Forgetting that God knows all their heaven-daring crimes, they evince themselves as deadly enemies to true godliness, and are guilty of all imaginable vice and abominations.

Oh, unthinking mortals! who will sustain the loss? Who will have finally to suffer? Surely no one but you yourselves; what will you do, when the afflictions of the Lord, lay hold on you? Whither will you look for deliverance? None can deliver you but God; but him, you have offended unceasingly, knowingly, and presumptuously! Against him, you have sinned with an uplifted hand; he will consequently, turn away his countenance from you; his ear will be deaf, so that you will not be heard, you will fall into despair, if you do not sincerely repent, and you will be subjects of misery, both in time and for eternity! But, my friends, let this be said to *your* admonition, nay, to the admonition of *us all.* Let me entreat you to imbibe and cultivate that principle of all virtue, the fear of God! This is the beginning of all true godliness. Be thou diligent in the pursuit of it! Honor God! Pray to God! Fall down before him, and pray unto him without ceasing! Pray in faith, and in the name of Jesus, our surety and mediator, that he may in mercy look upon you, that you may be plucked out of the pit, of your natural depravity! That you may sincerely repent and be justified by the blood-bought merits of Jesus Christ! Always have God, the omniscient God, before your eyes, and order all your doings accordingly. Remember how

even an earthly *king* or *prince*, would receive it, if you would act disrespectfully toward him, in his presence; would you not deserve his severe reprimand, and would you not therefore endeavor to act so as to secure his favor? And why will you treat God with less respect, than an earthly king or prince? Is he not the KING of kings and LORD of lords? Is it not he that can destroy both soul and body in hell? Therefore, fear him filially henceforth, and honor him, with due reverence: "keep your tongue from speaking evil, and restrain your lips from speaking falsely: cease to do evil: learn to do well: seek peace and follow it: seek peace with God and your own consciences. This will take place, when you, by true faith in Jesus Christ, are justified, and follow true holiness with obediance and with zeal; and if you do not let sin reign any more over your mortal bodies; if you do not obey it, in the lust thereof, but if you yield unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. Do but consider that you will thereby promote your own welfare; for how can you otherwise, escape the enemies of your salvation; whence do you expect, *whilst* galling under the ills of life, comfort, assistance, help and deliverance, if you do not repent of your sins, and by faith are not numbered among the children of God? to whom can you turn in all your distresses, with confidence in prayer, and be assured of your prayer being heard; when tribulation shall come in upon you, like a whirl-wind?

But you who are righteous, you who fear God and are devoted to his service; rejoice, and again I say unto you rejoice in your happy condition! The eyes of the Lord are upon you, and your names are engraven in the palms of his hands. He knows your rising up and lying down, and all your trials and afflictions; you are already, the blessed of the LORD, and he will still bless you the more, with all spiritual and heavenly blessings. He will protect you against the enemies of your salvation. He will help you with might; and he will deliver you with a "strong arm, and a mighty hand," for his ears are open to your cries. But oh, walk worthy of your high calling, so that you may

continually enjoy the light of his countenance, and be enabled, by his grace to discharge all the duties of virtue, and of the fear of God, and godliness, of which I have spoken to you. Follow true holiness; and go on from one degree of it to another, and then you will in time to come, "shine like the brightness of the firmament, and like the stars forever and ever, in the kingdom of God." AMEN.

SERMON XII.

ISAIAH, CHAP. LV. V. 1.

Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters.

INTRODUCTION.

The apostle Paul very emphatically ascribes to the Lord our God, a peculiar friendship and love to mankind, in which he revealed himself, in an especial manner, in the primitive days of the New Testament. Titus ii. 11.

God does not, however, love mankind, as though he found something in man, deserving of his love; for by nature, we are all in a wretched condition, for we are all utterly depraved, and desperately wicked, so that we merit nothing but the righteous wrath and indignation of God. Hence, by the love of God toward us, we are to understand, the eternal purpose of grace, whereby he applies to us all that is calculated to promote the salvation of our immortal souls, and make us happy, in time and eternity. And by this extraordinary love toward hell-deserving sinners, he forcibly exhibits the great degree of friendship which is connected with it. Friendship, tender and divine friendship, is manifested in all God's dealings toward man, inasmuch as he adapts them to the very impotencies of the sinner; and friendship, nay, the most astonishing friendship, is evinced in his word whereby he invites man to the enjoyment of his saving fellowship.

God exhibits such a friendship, especially in the New Testament, in which, not only the most excellent benefits of grace and salvation are held forth, out of pure love to man, but the most animating language is employed to inflame and to awaken the affections of the sinner; yea, all the invitations of the gospel are adapt-

ed to man's condition, so that the weakest may have every doubt, fear, and despondency removed. In the economy of the Old Testament, there was also a love of God towards mankind, or revealed to his people Israel; but it was blended with wrath, and hidden in types and shadows, and chiefly set forth in promises of what should take place in future. The real and actual appearance thereof was reserved for the days of the new covenant, in which Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness, was to enlighten the world with his exhilirating beams; when the thunders of the law, were changed into the music of the harp, and *its curses* into glad tidings, for indigent sinners. This was the time when the words of the prophecy, contained in our text, were fulfilled; when our gracious God, not only revealed his most astonishing love, to mankind, in offering the stupendous benefits of grace and salvation; but he also employed the most agreeable, the most acceptable, and most benevolent language to invite, and effectually move, the sinner to the acceptance of them. What can be more attractive? What can be more welcome to souls who are desirous of salvation, than the invitation, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters."

In order that we may rightly learn the *power* and *force* of this *friendly* invitation, we shall now consider,

Division I. The persons addressed, and

II. The duty enjoined on them.

O thou, who art the eternal source of love and compassion; thou dearest friend of mankind, God, our Saviour and Redeemer! teach us to know our duty—what we must do, and what we must be, in order to be assured of thy fellowship, and of an interest in the benefits of grace and salvation, which thou hast bestowed upon us through Jesus Christ! *Amen.*

First part.—It cannot be esteemed by us, a matter of indifference, my friends, who or what we are, if we desire to comfort ourselves with Christ or the benefits purchased by him. No! there are certain qualities insep-

arable from those, who have an interest in these, and who by faith enjoy Christ, and the blessings of his salvation. None will be allowed to drink out of this fountain of life, or to drink of the water flowing from this spiritual rock, unless they feel their wants, and thirst, and desire after it. Therefore the *thirsty* are addressed.

By the phraseology *thirsty*, we have to understand two things. *First*, Such persons are designed thereby, who are destitute of the blessings which satisfy the natural desires of the immortal soul. Thus we have to understand it, when it is said, Amos viii. 11: "There shall thirst for the hearing of the word of the Lord," that there was a great want for the word. *Secondly*, Those are also called thirsty, in whom the Spirit of the Lord has excited a strong desire to partake of the blessings, whereby the spiritual desires of the soul can be satisfied. Hence, it is written, "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God." Ps. xlii. 2. This has particular reference to the last, yet so as to include the first affections of the soul; and this is therefore presupposed; for such, as do not feel their spiritual wants, will not earnestly desire to satisfy them; such would be invited in vain, because they neither feel their spiritual wants, nor have they any desire for help. In short, they are such who, having a knowledge of their extreme poverty, have strong and ardent desires for Christ, and for the benefits of grace and salvation, which he purchased. This is, indeed, an appropriate simile to use in order most emphatically to describe the condition of souls desirous of salvation.

I. Whosoever thirsts, does not only want drink, but he is very sensible of his thirst, and frequently sore athirst, insomuch that he may be brought near death on account of it, as Samson, the celebrated champion in Israel was: Judges xv. 18.—And oh! when the sinner's heart, though as hard as a rock by nature, is melted into penitence, then he will learn to know what his poor soul is in need of, and that it is deprived of the true and eternal *good;* so that it is, at first, in great distress, fear, sorrow and pain, because he sees and feels his danger of languishing forever.

II. But as one who thirsts, has a great desire for drink,

which in some cases becomes so great, that it exceeds all his other desires, and the longer it continues the more ardent will it become. So it is with the *desire* of an *awakened soul* after the benefits of the grace and salvation of Jesus Christ. His desire is so great, so ardent and burning, that all minor desires are swallowed up by it, and are united with it, and the longer the Lord delays causing the beams of his grace to rise in the soul, the longer it must seek Jesus; the more will the desires be inflamed for him. For he that

III. Thirsts, seeks for means to quench his thirst. He seeks, he calls, and cries so long as there is the least hope, and strength in him. Even so it is, with the desire of the soul after Jesus, the fountain of life, for its salvation. It continues without ceasing to call and to cry after Jesus, that he would suffer himself to be found —that he would reveal himself to it, with his grace and love, and quicken and refresh it. "As the hart panteth for water," so the soul panteth for God in Christ. And if the bridegroom tarry, yet it does not yield its hope, but gathers all the strength afforded it of God, and *seeks* the longer, the more zealously, until it finds him, and can say, "My beloved is mine and I am his." Cant. ii. 16.

Now, all these are invited here in the text; *all*, it is said, *ye who are thirsty*. Consequently, none are excluded except those who are not yet thirsty, who have neither a knowledge, nor are sensible of their spiritual wants; who do not desire, and hence, much less sensibly evince the desire that their spiritual indigency may be supplied, and that they may be provided, and refreshed out of the fulness of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Otherwise, every soul, without exception, is here invited; they may have been ever such great and gross sinners, and their wants may be ever so great, if they only learn to know, and sensibly feel, their misery and poverty, and sincerely desire grace and help; here, then, is Jesus, who will ease them of the load of their guilt, here, then, is the water of life, that can cleanse them from their filth; here is a fulness of the most excellent benefits that can richly satisfy their wants and supply their deficiencies. Every one is invited, though they

be ever so weak, if they are only thirsty; if they know and feel their weakness, wants and infirmities, and evince a desire to have them removed, by the grace of God, and restored by the all-sufficiency and perfection of their divine Saviour; for not one of those souls, has reason to despair, before God, on account of its wants, "for the Lord is nigh unto all, that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth." Ps. clxv. 18. Yea, such souls must needs view this invitation as addressed to them, because these are the means which God employs to strengthen, comfort and quicken them. Duty constrains me to make another particular remark. There are persons, as far as we can judge, by their conduct, and from their actions, that may really be accounted as belonging to the spiritually thirsty, who are here invited; in so far as they sensibly feel their wants and deficiencies, and also have a strong desire after Jesus, and the benefits of his grace, and who comfort themselves, in the enjoyment of his grace, although this comfort is often mixed with doubts and fears. Yet, they hesitate to partake of the visible signs and seals of this inward grace—I mean the Lord's supper, because they consider themselves too weak, too imperfect, and too unworthy. But let such reflect, whether they act up to either their duty or interest, for who are they who are invited to come to Jesus? Are they the perfect? Are they those who are spiritually satisfied? O, no! Such are not to be found in the church militant upon earth; but the thirsty are invited, those who are poor in spiritual things; who know it aright, and who ardently desire to have their wants supplied. And to what end is the Lord's supper instituted? Does not our Saviour say, "Do this in remembrance of me?" *To his remembrance*, that *he* came into the world, *suffered*, *died*, and *rose* again from the dead, and thereby *purchased* for us those glorious *benefits* and *blessings*, of which he gives us visible signs and seals, in his holy supper, to his remembrance, that we partake of these gracious benefits, through him, and in this ordinance obtain, also, a visible assurance thereof. Now, since such feel their spiritual thirst and wants, as being destitute of the benefits of this covenant of grace, and have a

strong desire to participate in them, why do they not appear, with others who are invited, to be visibly assured that they have an interest in them. Can they, by faith, comfort themselves with a sense of an interest in Jesus and his blessings? Oh! why should they esteem themselves unworthy, of the outward signs and seals of his covenant? Is the sign more precious than the thing signified? Is the bread and wine of the holy supper, more holy than the body and blood of Jesus Christ, which is thereby represented? Judge what I say! Would not a bride, though assured of the affections of the bridegroom, receive the *ring* also, which he would tender her, on being united, as a token to assure her the more firmly, of his love and fidelity? Yes, most assuredly she would. Why, then, should a soul hesitate to receive the visible seals in the Lord's supper, of its spiritual espousals, with its heavenly bridegroom, if it is united with him by faith? Of a truth, the soul that refuses to do this, has not that hearty confidence and soul-felt love to the heavenly bridegroom, which is connected with joy unspeakable and full of glory, but has reason to be constantly in fear, dread and doubt, and such are without any spiritual assurance of salvation, who are guilty of rejecting this friendly invitation of the Lord Jesus. For why should he have instituted the holy supper, as a visible sign and seal, of a union with himself, and of the benefits of his salvation and grace, if none are worthy to approach it? It is true, we are subject to many deficiencies and frailties, and frequently fall into sin, even if we are in a state of grace. But there is a wide difference between this and the reigning sin committed by one who is yet in a state of nature. This is done presumptuously, but that out of weakness and precipitancy; but as soon as we are aware of it, we seek repentance, and ever strive against sin, and consequently, this should not keep us from partaking of the seals of the covenant; but we must there by seek to become more united with Christ, and through him, to become strong in the inner man, in order to resist the enemies of our salvation—Satan, the world, and sin, and our flesh and blood.

Second part.—But it is time friends, that we con-

sider the duties enjoined on the thirsty, as communicants at the spiritual table of the Lord Jesus Christ; as comprised in these *words*, "Ho, *come ye unto the waters.*"

The Holy Ghost is wont in the word of truth, to set forth, by the emblem of water, that which promotes the happiness of an immortal soul, and which is not to be found, but in fellowship with God, who is called "*a well of living water.*" Jer. ii. 3. And when our Saviour offers salvation to *all*, he promises that he would give them living water." John vi. But here is represented by water, in a special manner, 1. The eternal, and perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ, which he purchased by his obedience, suffering, shedding of blood and his death, and which is the depth of the sea, into which are cast the sins of penitent and believing sinners. It is that clean water, that shall be sprinkled upon them, whereby they shall become clean." Ez. xxxvi. 25. For thus it is written: "Oh, that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! Then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness, as the waves of the sea." Isa. xlviii. 18. And, there is also represented by water, 2. The preaching of the Gospel, in which, and by which, the righteousness of Christ is proclaimed and offered, accompanied with the gifts and operations of the Holy Ghost, which is the "water to be poured out upon the thirsty, and the streams upon the dry ground." Isa. xliv. 3."

The thirsty are invited to this water of salvation. Come to the water, *all ye thirsty.*

To come, and to *believe*, signify the same thing, especially when we speak of a coming unto Jesus. Jesus himself saith, "He that cometh to me, shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me, shall never thirst." John vi. 35. Even as coming is a moving of the body in a certain way, towards some object, so is true faith, of such efficacy to the soul, that by virtue of it, it seeks and finds life out of itself, namely, in Christ Jesus. Even as the place is left where a person was before by coming away, and is exchanged for another, so are faith and conversion at all times, inseparably connected. Consequently if a person come to the water

of salvation; if he believes with his whole heart, the doctrines of the Gospel; and if a person is thereby persuaded, to forsake and cast behind him the unfruitful works of darkness, the broken cisterns of self-righteousness, which hold no water; and to resort to the copious streams of the righteousness of Christ; and to seek cleansing, and satisfaction therein, then the sinner comes; and the soul coming thus immediately to Jesus, the fountain of life, is cleansed through him, from every sin, and cloathed with his perfect righteousness. But as man is again, susceptible of being polluted by this or that sin, by which he may perchance be overtaken; and, if even this were not the case, still the christian, is more or less imperfect and frail, so that it is necessary, for him to wash and cleanse his garments anew, and make them pure in the blood of the Lamb; to come nearer to Jesus, and to be more closely united with him; and to "receive out of his fulness, and grace for grace." In order to continue in union with Christ, and through him, to become more strong, and to have repeated assurances of the blessings of his grace, and to be strengthened, quickened, and comforted in waring against sin, and to be preserved and supported in the efficacy of spiritnal life; and attain in this, to a greater degree of dexterity : to do this, I say, a soul has to seek anew, to be united with Jesus, by an increase of faith, so *that* the believer may participate with him, in a spiritual manner; and hence, the *outward signs*, and *seals*, are not to be neglected, but to be used to the strengthening of our faith, and to the reformation and amendment of our lives; for thereby, the true child of God, partakes of the spiritually represented, and sealed blessings of his covenant, which by the outward signs and seals of this ordinance, and institution of Jesus Christ, are evidently set before us. Who then that has a true thirst, for these blessings, should hesitate to approach, and partake of the blessings of grace, and the waters of salvation, which flow from the Lord Jesus Christ, as also of the visible signs and seals of this inward grace? Every truly thirsty soul is most kindly and earnestly invited and encouraged; for thus runs the invitation, "Ho, *every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters.*"

Ho, (well:) this phrase is employed, in part, to give the invitation more emphasis, in order to awaken in those, more *attention*, who hear it, so that they may suffer themselves to be moved thereby, to observe their duty, without *delay;* but, it is also employed to make known, that those who are addressed are exposed to awful dangers; and that there is a divine and tender compassion manifested to deliver and protect them. For such is the compassion of the Lord our God, that he will assist the *helpless sinner*, who knows not how to help himself, and therefore most compassionately imparts to him his counsel, in order, that he may the more readily be induced to hear and attend to *those things, which make for his everlasting peace*: and so desirous is God that this may take place, that every obstacle is removed, that might hinder a soul, tempted with fear and doubt. Whosoever, therefore, sincerely thirsts, is most kindly invited to come to the fountain of life. These are the properties and dispositions, which the Lord Jesus requires in his subjects and guests. He describes them as *hungering* and *thirsting after righteousness*. Matt. v. He invites the thirsty to "come and drink." John vii. 37.

He says, "that he did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Matt. ix. 13. "That the gospel is preached to the poor." Matt. xi. 5. His apostles followed his footsteps. They were commanded to invite, "the *poor*, the *cripple*, the *lame* and *impotent*," Luke xvi. 13—21. And in fine, "the spirit and the bride say come, and let him who is athirst come,—and whosever *will*, let him come and take of the water of life freely." Rev. xxii. 17.

APPLICATION.

But friends, we have here, an important occasion afforded us, cautiously to examine, ourselves, whether we are of the number invited. Where could we expect to find such persons sooner, than among us, where the invitations of the gospel, are so free and powerful? Yet, do we not find the very reverse? It is true, the Lord has his *little flock*, of thirsty souls, among us,

for which, may his name be praised, for ever and ever. For *they* my friends, are my crown, my only comfort. And they serve to encourage me, in the arduous charge which the Lord has imposed upon me, among you. But it is deplorable, that there are so few.

Behold the multitude, and you will be convinced of this? How few are there, who know and feel their wants and indigence? How few, who manifest, any desire, for the blessings of salvation? How few, do for this purpose, use the means of grace; and particularly attend to prayer, and calling upon God to fulfil his promises. But many there are, who are of the decided opinion, that they are rich and increased in goods, while as God knows, they are "poor, miserable, wretched, blind, and naked." They live prayerless, consequently without God, and Christ, in the world. Although some may evince, at certain times, a desire for the blessings of salvation in Christ, yet they are perfectly satisfied with this general desire, with these general emotions, without doing violence to the kingdom of heaven, and contending earnestly for eternal life. Hence, their common language is, I hope, I hope, to be saved!

No wonder that the compassionate, the friendly, the gracious invitations of the Lord, are so little regarded!

No wonder that many come not, and have no desire to come; although they are pressingly invited to "Come, for that all things are ready!" But oh, consider all of you, who are in this condition! Reflect, that you have no lot nor part in this momentous concern; in the righteousness of Christ, as long as you remain in this condition! Consider, that, if you continue in your present state, you will have to eternally perish! Consider that if you will not close in with the invitation of the gospel, and come *to-day*, as spirtually thirsty to this fountain of life, that ere you enjoy another occasion, you may be eternally excluded, from the kingdom of God! Therefore, do acknowledge the poverty of your souls, and flee to the fountain of life! Use the means of grace, and call on the compassionate Redeemer, without ceasing, that he may have mercy on you! Come, as you are, with all your wretchedness! Only

come, contrite and penitent, divested of all self-righteousness! But, come to-day, and delay not till to-morrow, to-morrow it may be too late. "To-day! to-day! if ye will hear my voice, harden not your hearts." If you attend to the friendly invitation of the Lord; if you come as spiritually thirsty, then the Lord will graciously condescend and reveal his glory in you, and feast your souls with the bread and water of eternal life! Oh, that we might hear the voice of God to-day, that the invitation contained in our text, might not be disregarded by any of us! "For the Spirit and the bride say come; and let him that heareth say come; and let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." AMEN.

SERMON XIII.

ISAIAH, CHAP. lv. v. 1.

And ye that have no money, come and buy, and eat, yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

INTRODUCTION.

"Blessed," saith the Saviour, "are the poor in spirit, for their's is the kingdom of heaven." Matt. v. 3. By the poor in spirit, the Saviour understands such souls who know and sensibly feel their spiritual wants and indigence; their utter impotence and inability to perform any thing good, so as to obtain any worthiness to recommend them to God, and therefore, despair of themselves, and deny all their own righteousness, and appear as petitioners at the feet of Jesus, to obtain from him, and out of the fulness of his all-sufficiency, by faith, that which can make them rich, acceptable and well pleasing, in the sight of God.

Those are blessed; and be they ever so humble and unworthy in their estimation, or in the eyes of the world; or be they ever so poor and forsaken; yet their condition is the most happy, in which sinful man can be placed. Yea, the more humble, the poorer, the more forsaken they feel themselves, the more blessed they are, and the nearer they are to the enjoyments of the blessings and benefits of the grace of Jesus and his divine riches. Yea, they already participate in these blessings in this world.

Who will dare to deny this, when Jesus himself declares it? For he says expressly, "For theirs is the kingdom of heaven." *Righteousness;* the full forgiveness of sin; *fellowship with God;* the spirit of adop-

tion, and life eternal; in a word, every thing that a state of grace here, and a state of glory hereafter, can impart, *are their's.* They are partakers of it already: and if they are not fully assured of this, they need but come, they need but boldly stretch out the hand of faith, and without the least delay, and with full confidence, lay hold, and apply to themselves the inexhaustible riches of their all-sufficient Saviour. Therefore, such souls are kindly and most cordially invited, in order that they may not be detered by any premature fear, or intimidated by the temptations of the fell enemy of their souls, as it is too frequently the case, from coming to perfect their happiness. Wherefore they are called on in my text, "And ye that have no money, come and buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price."

In these words, you have an infallible work before you, whereby you may know, whether, and how far you may consider yourselves to be partakers of the blessings of the grace of Jesus Christ, and how to be fully assured thereof. Let us therefore, take particular notice,

Division I. Of the persons addressed; and,

II. Whereunto they are called and invited.

First part.—The persons addressed in the text, in which, the blessed Redeemer addresses them himself, are they "who have no money;" "*ye who have no money.*"

Money is the means, for which have been exchanged, from time immemorial, among every nation, possessions, and every other necessary of life. Accordingly, it is an emblem of such spiritual means, whereby a person can procure the salvation of his soul, that is, such a righteousness, that is acceptable in the sight of God; on which account, man is absolved of all his guilt and punishment, and can be made meet for his fellowship here in time, and in eternity. And as money is an indispensable means among men, to procure the necessaries of life; so it is also an emblem of the indispensa-

ble necessity, of such a righteousness for man, that can enrich him in his soul, and procure him the necessaries of spiritual life and joy; whereas in a state of nature, he is in a wretched condition.

Those "*who have no money,*" are in a spiritual sense, such as have not only come short of the glory of God, but are altogether impotent, and cannot do the least, to redeem their souls; consequently can acquire no right, or title of God, to life and salvation. But since this impotency is common to all; since none living is righteous before God; since none "can give any thing, to redeem his soul;" Matt. xvi. 26; since all by nature, are poor, miserable, wretched, blind, naked, and bare; we have not only to understand in general, by such, those who have no money, and are invited to the blessings of salvation, and the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ; such as are deprived of all righteousness acceptable to God, but in particular, such as are humbly sensible of their insufficiency, to help themselves; who know the nothingness, of all their own works to please God, and hence acknowledge from an inward conviction, "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness, are as filthy rags." Isa. lxiv. 6. Such souls who act like pennyless beggars, who seek nothing of themselves, and in their own strength, but out of themselves in and of Jesus, and who do it with zealous and unceasing prayer and supplication; who are by no means detered on account of their spiritual poverty, but who call on the Lord with a holy boldness and without ceasing, that he would grant them the righteousness of Christ, out of mere grace; and who when they obtain this, do not ascribe any thing unto themselves, but wholly, and solely, unto the free grace and mercy of God in Christ Jesus.

Such are here invited, and none of this character has reason to let his courage fail on account of his entire unworthiness before God: "For the Lord is nigh unto all who call upon him, to all who call upon him with fervency and zeal." Psalm cxlv. 18. It is his work, which he began, in those souls, and he will surely not abandon it. For whom he maketh poor, he also maketh rich indeed. Yea, they are even on this account, called

and invited by Jesus. Therefore it is said unto them, "Come, and buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." Let us therefore,

Second part.—Take particular notice of the blessings of grace, to which they are invited, who have no money, and by what metaphors they are represented. They are represented:

I. By wine; and,

II. By milk.

I. Wine is used in scripture, as a very common emblem, of the blessings of grace, of the Lord Jesus Christ. Eternal wisdom says, "Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine, which I have mingled." Prov. ix. 5. Here he makes known to the poor in spirit, to the pennyless soul, a full manifestation of the unspeakable love of God in Christ Jesus; as he is perfectly satisfied and reconciled through him, with such souls. To this belong particularly the full forgiveness of sin, and gracious reception into the state of adoption, the state of liberty, and of freedom; the admission into the full heritage of the kingdom of God—the anticipation of a future happiness, in the fruition of glory with God—together with all the joyful sensations arising out of the communion with God, and the indwelling of *his Spirit*, in such a degree, that they are not only thereby comforted, in every temptation, but are also refreshed and made glad beyond degree, so that they occasionally are in such a condition, that, their cup, as it were, runneth over." Psalm xxiii. 5. That they become spiritually drunk, because that which they enjoy transcends the human understanding, and hence it is said of such in Christ, "For I am DRUNK, of *love*."

But to this wine there is

II. *Milk* added. By this also, the blessings of the Lord Jesus Christ, are represented in the word of God, and especially those which are necessary to the increase and spiritual strength of believers. For the apostle Peter, expressly exhorts, "As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that it may grow

thereby." 1 Pet. ii. 2. Milk here sets forth to the poor in spirit, to the drooping soul, such operations of the grace, of the Holy Ghost, whereby the *understanding* is endowed with more knowledge, and the *will* is represented with more power unto holiness, in which alone consists, the growth in a spiritual life. By *wine*, as already remarked, is represented that which refreshes, and by milk, that which strengthens them. It is for this reason that *wine* and *milk*—these *refreshing* and *strengthening* blessings of the *grace* of Christ Jesus, are connected; because the sinner stands in need of both, desires both, and longs for both from the Lord. For the more the Lord refreshes souls, the more strength they desire in order to bring him offerings of gratitude; whence it is also evident, that not only the most glorious benefits of grace, are represented; but also disposed of in such a manner, as to be adapted to the exigencies of each; whether they be such, as have enjoyed grace for a long time, or have just entered into a state of peace with God, or are about entering; whether they be weak children in Christ, or courageous youths, or disciplined fathers in Christ; each can find what is necessary for him. They are all called, to "Come here, buy and eat; come here, and buy without money and without price." Three things are however required of such:

I. *To come.*

II. *To buy.*

III. *To eat.*

First. They are invited to *come*. This is a very common emblem, used in holy writ, by which the Holy Ghost represents faith; as the Saviour himself teacheth, when he saith, "He that cometh to me, shall never hunger: and he that believeth on me shall never thrist." John vi. 35. The Spirit of God uses the same phraseology in the words immediately preceding the passage just quoted, when he invited the thirsty, by the mouth of the prophet, "*Come to the water;*" by

which we are to understand, not only the *refuge*, which believers seek in Jesus, but also *conversion*, from its beginning. But, here in the text, by *coming*, such a progress of faith is represented by which a soul advances to a fuller enjoyment of all the benefits of the righteousness of Christ, after which, it had been thirsting, seeking by faith to enjoy in Jesus. The spiritually poor and indigent souls *come*, in a spiritual manner, to partake of *wine;* inasmuch as they appropriate to themselves, by faith in Christ, the forgiveness of their sins, and justification of their souls, and by their right of adoption, they approach the throne of grace, with freedom where they become more and more familiar with their covenant God, as reconciled to them in Christ Jesus. They *come* particularly, to partake of *milk*, inasmuch as they seek by faith, every thing needful to strengthen and to increase them in all the powers of the inner-man; and to this end they use every means of grace, in order to be better qualified and prepared for the praise of the glorious grace of God. But if we desire to attain our end, by *coming*, we must also,

Secondly.—Buy. To purchase, is to tender a certain price, in order to make the object of our desire our own. A figure, frequently used, to express the manner and way in which souls, desirous of salvation, become partakers of the blessings of grace; but as the poor in spirit are here described, as without money, it naturally follows that we have not to understand this language literally. Not as though they had any thing of themselves to give unto God, as a price, for the blessings which they expect of him. But to *buy*, here, requires this. Such souls, as the case of their spiritual poverty, and pennyless condition brings this with it, must be sensibly convinced, that they have not those blessings of themselves, but have to seek for them out of themselves; and though they have nothing to give as a price to God, for them, still they have something which they may venture to part with, and must spare. They must "deny themselves and every other creature." They must be willing to suffer, the "loss of all things, and count them but as dung, that they may win Christ."

Phil. iii. 8. And although they, of themselves, have not the price to offer for themselves; still they have previously to receive it, at the hand of Christ, which they afterwards bring unto God; I mean the perfect righteousness of Christ, which they lay hold of, by faith, and is accounted unto them as righteousness of God; and which they present to God as price, and through which, all the other blessings of grace, which Christ purchased, are made their own. Thus they come *to eat*. We naturally, see man provide himself with food, and he prepares it, that he may afterwards, actually by eating, partake thereof, and taste its pleasant flavor, and be strengthened thereby. And thus it is with those who are spiritually poor and impoverished. They have by true and living faith, to appropriate to themselves the blessings of salvation and grace; in relation to which, they are admonished, "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly." Cant. v. 1. "Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled." Prov. ix. 5. "That they may taste and see that the Lord is good." Psalm xxxiv. 7. "That they may experience, that his fruit is sweet to the taste." Cant. ii. 3. That they may be satisfied and strengthened. In which exercise, faith increases, until it ends in a full fruition.

But as this of itself, appears to be so very extraordinary, that souls who are without money, should come to buy, such glorious riches of grace; and the Spirit of God, foreseeing that there would be some among the destitute, who might imagine that something more were necessary to be brought to God, than the righteousness of Christ, he has expressly shown, that no such buying is intented here, in which self is to constitute any part. "Come," it is written, "come, and buy *without money and without price.*"

It is repeated the third time, *come*, in order to show that it wholly depends upon faith, to direct those to this treasure, who depend yet upon self, in ever such a small degree; that they continue no longer dependent on self, or at such broken cisterns; but come without delay, to the true fountain, to buy and to take, *without money, and without price.*

Without money. By rejecting and casting behind all self-righteousness, all, even the most subtile dependence on self. For the soul cannot become a partaker of the blessings of grace and salvation at the hands of Jesus, until it humbles itself, until it denies itself wholly, until it divests itself of trust to the creator, and seeks without price, or as it is otherwise said, seeks these blessings out *of grace.* For they are to every believer, nothing else than a free gift of the grace of God, in Christ Jesus; and the Lord will only grant them unto the penitent sinner in this way. Here man needs to bring nothing at all with him, but go with a sense of his poverty, and nakedness to Jesus, and lay hold of his righteousness—of his precious *merits* by faith, and therewith approach boldly, into the presence of the Father, and he shall become a partaker of every blessing of grace and salvation, and that without price,—out of *free grace.* "For in Christ Jesus, we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." Eph. i. 7.

APPLICATION.

Is not this, my friends, a glorious invitation? and are not these glorious blessings and favors which are here exhibited to all those invited, and which are promised to be given to them, without delay, if they but come? And have we not here a glorious occasion to examine ourselves, whether we are of the number invited, and consequently we have a right to comfort ourselves with the assurance of the offered blessings of salvation and grace? Yea, it is this, my dear hearers, on which it now especially depends. What would it avail us, were we to tell of ever so great and glorious things, of the kingdom of God, if we were not to lay it to each one's heart and conscience, by the grace of God, so that each may receive his portion in due season?

We could wish you first, therefore, to consider well whether you are in sincerity, of those who are spiritually poor, and without money? But alas! your own conscience will tell you that the number of such among us, is but very small; to prove which, would be but an

easy task. True, we find some that are poor and without money, in the world. But among that large number of poor and wretched, there are but few who know and feel their spiritual poverty. The vain imagination of their supposed good condition, is common to the rich and poor. Though they confess themselves poor sinners, yet they imagine their riches, to be so great, that heaven cannot fail them, in their dying hour; and thus they are manifestly captivated and puffed up, by works of self-righteousness. For example, one flatters himself, that he yet observes some of the outward duties of the service of God—the other, that he gives much alms—the third, that he has no evil heart—the fourth, that he is not as bad as others are. But it is the most perilous with those who are intent on hearing much preaching; never to neglect the holy supper; to read the scriptures at home; to avoid evil company; but still withal to have an unchanged heart, as they are certainly among those who seek to please God, by such things as crying, "LORD, LORD! and yet do not the will of the Father who is in heaven." These are among such, who know that they have no *money*, but this conviction is without power, and they frequently avail themselves, of this as an excuse. Their poverty does not press them, for they feel it not. They do not sincerely desire the blessings of salvation, and their condition is thus the more perilous.

No wonder, that the invitation to these precious blessings of salvation and grace, and the operations of the Spirit of God within, and the preaching of the gospel without, are not more regarded, or have so little access to your hearts! The *wine of grace*, and the *milk of the gospel*, are not relished as long as your taste is vitiated by the unclean sinks of sensuality, and the things of this world, into which, many are so deeply sunk that they do not even think of spiritual blessings, much less feel any sincere desire after them. They are sufficiently acute to judge of the things of this world. They are not ignorant of the best quality of eatables, of *wine*, and whatever is palatable, who make their belly their God, and fatten themselves for the great day of slaughter. But do we inquire, concerning the *milk of the*

gospel, and the *wine* of the grace of the New Testament? We find there is nothing but utter blindness and ignorance about those things. In addition to this, there is a natural hatred and aversion to the way by which alone we can attain to the enjoyment of the blessings of the salvation of Jesus. Is it not true, that you wish that God would *come to you* with them? But are you so much concerned, as to rise and to seek the Lord, and to come unto him? You scarcely deem it worthy of your attention, to attend the courts of the Lord. Some attend occasionally, but only from habits, and in this frame of mind approach the table of the Lord, where the outward *signs* and *seals* of heavenly blessings, are dispensed. But is the Lord there, to be found, where nothing but the body appears? where the heart, the affections and desires of the soul are not present? where the greater part who attend, if they were asked, could not give the reason why they come? At least the motive is wanting to purchase those blessings which are to strengthen the soul. Little is ventured for the kingdom of heaven's sake. The works of this world, are not relinquished, for the fulness of the bread in the house of the heavenly Father. The world and sin are not renounced, in order to become a guest of the Lord. The lusts of the flesh are not crucified for Christ's sake. Nor a single human favor, a single sinful association or self-interest, is denied for Christ's sake. They who have a desire for this spiritual provision, spoil it with the leaven of the Pharisees. They depend on their external honesty and form of godliness, and are displeased if convinced otherwise. They are not aware, that their own, even their best works want condemnation. And thus the invitation to the blessings of salvation and grace, are fruitless and without success.

My friends, judge yourselves—is not this the true condition, in which the greater part of you are? But how will you thus stand in the day of wrath—a day on which neither silver nor gold, will redeem? Where will you appear, if even those who can say, Lord have we not prophesied in thy name; have we not cast out devils in thy name? must hear, "Depart from me, I have never known you; depart ye workers of iniquity."

What will be more miserable than your awful disappointment after having vainly hoped, you find that all your brightest expectations were but dreams?

How much, O how much, better would you do, to close in with the right way! The first thing to be done here is; you must seek, by the grace of God, to obtain a sensible knowledge of your wants and deficiencies; of your helplessness and your desert of hell; and you must therefore begin to pray to the Lord unceasingly. For he that has but a mite to pay God with; he that imagines to be good in this or that respect, before God; is yet far from the ransom money, of Jesus Christ. Do you now see your poverty?—cast yourselves at the foot of the Cross. The less you can help yourselves, the more earnestly cry unto God for help. If you now feel that there is no ransom in any creature, to redeem your souls; let this, then, teach you to deny yourselves, with every other creature, and seek every thing by the grace of God in Christ Jesus.

You who have such a view—such a sense of your wants, and are therefore faint-hearted, be assured that this is a glorious condition. If you come, and even bring nothing but your filthy rags, wounds, stripes and putrifying sores before God, still with Jesus, there are blessings, for such as have no money, these are consequently, also, for you. The Lord does not let us feel our poverty in vain; this makes us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light: the Lord desires such to come to him, that he may replenish them. None, that are truly poor and pennyless, need despair or be dismayed; the debt may be ever so great; the heart ever so abominable; the grace ever so long disposed! You are all invited. The Lord is waiting for you, only come! come, desirous of salvation, to the throne of grace, with unceasing prayer and supplication, until Jesus reveals himself unto you. Come without delay —come immediately—avail yourselves of the present opportunity. You shall want nothing; for you do not come to a consuming fire, but unto a merciful God; to God, whose heart is broken for Ephraim's sake, that he must have mercy on him. But listen to some hindrances, that have prevented many, and perhaps even some

of you to the present period, that they may be removed. The lethargy of the heart, is an hindrance, to buy all these things. For Satan is very busy to place every kind of hindrances in the way of a convicted soul. Here there is frequently a secret desire, or a friend, whom we wish not willingly to displease, or some other hindrance in our calling and outward circumstances. But what do we lose? Nothing! nothing! But we are much gainers! *Wine* to refresh, and *milk* to strengthen! What is yet wanting? Should not this remove every doubt, and make us willing to forsake all, for Jesus? But it sometimes happens that the weak in faith frequently are shunned on account of their poverty, and wish not to appear thus naked before the Lord. This root of unbelief, and the works of self-righteousness, are for a long time concealed in the heart. But why is it always without money and without price, or out of grace? Is not this the invitation, that we shall buy without money and without price? None have a better right to *come*, and to *buy*, than those who feel themselves poor and unworthy.

Well, then, my dear friends, come with all freedom! Come, by all means, to the fountain of the righteousness of Christ, and cast all your sins into it. And if you have found it, be encouraged to enter still more closely into the fruition of the blessings of grace of your all-sufficient Saviour. Let your whole life be a continued coming unto the Lord. Come to receive new grace. Desire not only *wine* to *refresh*, but also *milk* to *strengthen* you. Let us strive after holiness, for *new strength* to *deny ourselves* the *more*, and to *glorify God;* to increase our comfort and spiritual joy. And those who thus come to the Lord, will meet with all the fat and pleasant things of his house. And thus we shall advance from strength to strength, from power to power, till we finally meet God in Zion. AMEN.

SERMON XIV.

JOHN, CHAP. viii, v. 36.

If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

INTRODUCTION.

There is nothing more excellent, in the whole world, than *liberty*, if properly used, and rightly applied. On the contrary, there is nothing more degrading and despicable, than to suffer the fetters of slavery. A nation, whose king or prince has an uncontrolled power and dominion over the *lives* and *property* of his *subjects*, and who is an ill-disposed king or prince, such a nation is the most miserable under the sun, and is not able to say, that any thing is its own. But a nation, whose king or prince has indeed a royal power and dominion, but with such limitations, by absolute laws, that he has to use those powers to their weal and interest; and not to use them to the detriment and hurt thereof: such a nation, is a happy nation. Mankind know how to appreciate such liberty; and at no time more than when it is infringed, and there is danger of losing it; immediately, every thing is in commotion. Then all solemnly pledge themselves to each other. Every means is resorted to, to preserve liberty, and all must be sacrificed in support of liberty. And it is by no means unlawful, and blameworthy, that a nation strives to maintain its liberty, which it may have enjoyed from the beginning, and at all times; if it is done by force, yet orderly, and with a becoming christian decorum, and not sooner than necessity requires. But this subject deserves the following remark: What does it avail an individual, or what advantage has he, if he is bodily free, but if in relation

to the soul is in the greatest bondage? Who, indeed, would not rather be a slave according to the body, and free in regard to the soul, than to have the soul enslaved and the body free? For the bondage of the body will only extend to the grave, but the bondage of the soul endureth forever, if we are not set free in time. But, alas, this is little thought of, as each may readily be convinced of this, of himself. Yea, this is something that sounds strangely to the ears of the worldling. But, indeed, this is the deplorable truth, and it defends on no great effort, to place this subject in its true light, by the introduction to it afforded in the text: "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye are free indeed;" as these words afford us an excellent opportunity to contemplate

Division I. In what the true liberty of a soul consists; and,

II. How this is obtained; nay, the only way in which it may be obtained.

First part.—My brethren, if the richest, the most noble, and according to the opinion of the world, even the greatest, the most mighty sovereign or monarch of this world, is yet in a state of nature, he is with all his temporal liberty, with his power and highness, a miserable slave and servant, as to his immortal soul. For by nature, all mankind, are without any, even the least degree of difference, under the bondage, and in the slavish servitude of *Satan*, of *sin*, and of the *world*. The *world*, with the things thereof; with its customs, manners and usages, governs so illimitedly, the natural man, that it requires to all its dictates and maxims, a conformity, and is desirous of being honored as a god; and according to which, the carnal minded, strives to conform as to its custom either in some part, or in the whole thereof; hence, says the apostle, "Whosoever therefore, will be a friend of the world, is an enemy to God." James vi. 4. Sin holds natural men, as tributary servants, and the longer man lives unto sin, the more power and dominion it has over him, and ul-

timately is treated worse by sin, than the vilest slave. Of this bondage of sin, Paul makes mention. Rom. vi. 17—20. And whence is all this, but from the lamentable fall of man; since man has departed from God, and surrendered himself unto Satan, and *his service*, "who is the spirit, that now worketh in the children of disobedience." Eph. ii. 2. And therefore, we as natural men, are under the curse of the law, and under eternal condemnation; and consequently, we are not only in a servile bondage, but we may also expect servile punishment. For the power and dominion which these tyrannical lords, Satan, sin, and the world, exercise over us, who are in a state of nature, are so great, that they suffer us not to exercise any will of our own, much less, leave us any power and ability to do that which God and the salvation of our souls require. And therefore a mighty hand—a supernatural power, is required, "to work in us, both to will and to do." Phil. ii. 13.

From this a person may be delivered by virtue of true repentance, and a living faith in Jesus Christ. For instance, you may have come out of the kingdom, out of the bondage, out of the service of Satan, sin, and the world, by grace; you may be reconciled unto God, and have received the forgiveness of sin; you may be accounted free from the *curse* of the *law*, if you by faith lay hold of the righteousness of Christ; you may consider yourself, an actual heir of salvation in Christ Jesus, instead of lying under condemnation; and yet you may not have pressed through into the spirit of liberty. Therefore, give ear to the following remarks, which will make this plain to you: A soul that does not stand in perfect liberty, can, according to my opinion, easily know it by the light of the Spirit; inasmuch as notwithstanding all the grace which it has received, since its first awakening and illumination, it is yet living constantly in a secret and servile fear of God; and therefore, it enjoys not that free and filial access to God in prayer; although it may, sometimes resolve to use this liberty; but immediately the contrary is manifested, as it finds itself much straigthened in prayer. In love to God and his fellow-men, such a

soul is also circumscribed, and, as it were, selfish. Its conversation, its intercourse, and its dealings, all exhibit limits, which it has set for itself. It is in part as it were, under the gospel, but still more under the law. It is wholly engaged with the law; and hence seems to make it a matter of conscience, concerning a fly, and frequently swallows a camel; which disposition never can afford it inward peace and joy. It seeks before it is actually justified, its sanctification, by a close observance of the law, in Christ Jesus. Whereas it ought only to aspire to it in Christ Jesus, through the gospel. It is therefore, bound up to all the legal ceremonies, as something essential. And when the transgressions of the law present themselves; then hell again, as it were, lays hold on the soul, until, if I may so express myself, the law is again destroyed by the law. Notwithstanding such a soul may, in the beginning, have gone out, in part or nearly altogether, from the service of Satan, of sin, and of the world, still it is in a great degree filled with anxious concern, on account of the enemies of salvation, in having to fear them servilely, and backslides from its past religious attainments, when a proper opportunity is afforded for the enemy of salvation to present to it his fiery temptation. And why? Because, the head of the old serpent is not fully bruised, by Jesus, in the soul; because, that although sin has lost its dominion in part, and may be in a goodly degree conquered, but not wholly; and because, that the world has yet too much influence, upon such a soul, inclining it, by some means or other, to conform to the usages thereof, in some points that are not lawful. In short, the understanding, the will and other affections and actions are all deprived of what may be considered perfect liberty.

But where there is perfect liberty of the soul, there is quite a different state of things, both as to the internal, and the external exercises of the believer. There Satan's, that old serpent's head is bruised in that soul, through the grace of Christ Jesus; or to speak more plainly, his power on that soul is so destroyed by Christ, that he can do nothing essential, to the injury or prostration of such a soul: except it gives him the

weapons into his own hand. For he is made as impotent and helpless, as an helpless infant. Sin will be subjugated, for it is made like unto a malefactor who is bound in prison. It would fainly break forth in its affections and desires; it makes many an effort, and frequently causes some tumult. But it can never attain to any reigning power, before it is discovered in its satanic knavery. The *world* is also, under the feet, of a liberated christian. He is free from it, and unconcerned about its praise or reviling. He indeed lives in the world, and uses it as much as others, without abusing it; but his chief walk and thoughts are in heaven. Hé lives as a child in the house, and in communion with his Heavenly Father, without servilely fearing him. With perfect freedom he approaches God, in prayer. He has continual access to the throne of grace. With an open heart, with enlarged desires he does not only remember his own wants, but the wants of the whole human family. He makes no difference between Jew and Gentile;—between circumcision and uncircumcision, but only looks upon the new creature. His conversation, his life, his deportment all testify, of a becoming freedom and an uncircumscribed state of affections. You find no legal formality about him. The law written in the heart, is indeed the only rule and standard of all his doings external or internal. But he seeks nothing, nor does he find any thing therein. Jesus alone, is his righteousness and strength, his sanctification, his all that he knows to bring before God. Therefore he has constant peace and happiness within him. For if here or there he digresses, he still finds himself in the city of refuge, the wounds of Jesus, and also in a continued reconciliation with God. He does, therefore, nothing any more by compulsion, but voluntarily; he is no longer bound to elementary, external, and visible things, but he observes all things out of love to Jesus; but he is therefore the more constant therein. He is not engaged with matters; he is not bound by this or that non-essential; but his spirit is elevated above all this, to things that are real, which are in Christ Jesus. In a word, there is freedom in the understanding, in the will, and in all the other affections

of the mind within, as well as in outward actions and doings. This is a brief and imperfect representation of a christian set at liberty; which is the ground of his happiness in Christ Jesus upon earth.

Here some one might object and say, In this way christianity would be made to be libertinism. In this manner, under this pretext of christian liberty, mankind could separate and withdraw themselves from every good regulation and outward observances. In this way, one might speak and do as he pleases. But no—this is by no means the liberty of the gospel; for it has by all means its bounds, which dare not and cannot be transcended. And in such a manner it is not to be called liberty, but it is much more to be called gross audacity; where this liberty is used for an occasion of malice, contumacy, and all manner of selfishness. And, in general, none are free, except the Son make them free.

Second part.—The Son of God, Jesus Christ, our blessed Redeemer, is therefore the true and the only author of this blessed condition of the soul, and the true and legitimate liberty of the gospel in the same. He alone it is, that causes or bringeth forth this liberty through his Spirit, by the power of his gospel, and the living word preached. Therefore, saith Paul, "Now the Lord is that Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." 2 Cor. iii. 17. This plainly teacheth, that the Holy Ghost, through him, Jesus himself, by virtue of faith, dwells in the soul, erects his throne, must rule and govern alone therein; for the soul to know itself to be in perfect liberty. For he alone it is, who, like he called forth Lazarus, with a mighty, "Arise, come forth" soul from thy prison, out of that circumcribed state of things, must call forth the soul and release it from the bonds with which it has hitherto been shackled; that the soul may walk in perfect liberty before him, and increase in grace; for this can never take place before.

But whom the Son thus makes free is free indeed. It is not a self-created liberty, imaginary, acquired or borrowed from other men, it is something real, actual, deeply grounded in the soul, and of constant duration.

Men may oftentimes place themselves in this or that way, into the liberty of the children of God. But assuredly this is not of long continuance. They soon betray and cast themselves out, of their own accord. But the liberty into which Christ leads a soul, endureth forever.

Whom the Son makes free, he is free indeed. Not only half, not only in this or that point, but wholly and in all points. Men may ever advance thus far, that they may be in some points nearly like unto the liberated of the Lord; yea, be like unto them. But in other points they betray their circumscribedness. But the liberty into which Jesus leads the soul, is not a half but a perfect liberty, which it has as a peculiar mark, whereby it can only be known.

Whom the Son makes free, he is free indeed. It is not libertinism, nor a false liberty, that one should be allowed to think, to speak and to do what he pleases; that one should make it a cloak to cover false notions, or make it conversion. No—this is not liberty, but audacity, impudence and selfishness. The liberty into which Jesus leads the soul has surely its well-directed bounds. With it, and in it, nothing can stand the test, but what is in accordance with God, with his word, with all his perfect virtues, and with all the good regulations of his church. Therefore, Paul admonishes believers, "Take heed that ye use not your liberty for an occasion to the flesh." And the apostle Peter says, "As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness." A truly free man of the Lord, will avoid all these and other evasions, differing from those who are either audacious, impudent, or who abuse their liberty in some way or other. And he especially, in regard to his liberty, condescends to the weak, and will rather yield in some particulars his liberty, rather than to become a stumbling-block unto them. 1 Cor. viii. 9. A christian has to see well to it, that he use the liberty granted him, according to the mind of the Lord, and that he suffer himself to be led therein, governed and directed, by his word and Spirit; or it will be more beautiful to him than profitable. He that uses and employs the li-

berty of the gospel aright, it is, whom the Son makes free, and who is free indeed.

APPLICATION.

Would to God, my friends, we could consider you all as such, who are made free by the Son. But oh! how lamentable it is with many of you! Instead of having been partakers of the liberty in Jesus, you are still in chains and fetters of sin, and of the flesh. Judge yourselves, can they say that they are made free by the Son, who have hitherto, been in the service of Satan, the world and sin, in spite of all the exhortations of God and of his word? No, no; and if they do, it is but an imaginary liberty. Can they say that the Son has made them free, though they may say that they have been awakened; that they are the blessed and liberated of the Lord; who, in their life, conduct, conversation and walk, show the very reverse? No, no; and if they do, still this awakening, this blessing is not real, and thus their imaginary liberty is not founded on a true foundation. But, O unhappy souls! you who are yet under the power and control of Satan, the world and sin. You are prisoners of hell; and if you do not shortly submit to the sceptre of the kingdom of the Son of God, you will be eternally bound by the Prince of Darkness, where deliverance is looked for in vain. Therefore, arise, extricate yourselves from the fetters of sin, know your spiritual bondage; fall down and swear allegiance to the KING OF KINGS; call and cry unto him, O Lord Jesus! deliver me also from the fetters of Satan, of the world and of sin. "Make me a prisoner free, that I may thy bounden be."

But you who have entered into the liberty of Christ, take heed to the inexpressible grace of God in Christ Jesus, and never forget the good which the Lord has done to your souls. But, use the liberty in which you are according to the mind of Christ, and the precepts of the gospel. Walk in the constant discharge of every duty toward God and man. Strive to maintain your liberty to the end, against all your spiritual enemies, then you will attain to that liberty in the heavens,

where you will be liberated from sin and its consequences, as well as from every temptation, of every provocation and allurement of the world; where you will enjoy in the blessed communion of God and Christ; the fulness of peace and of joy at his right hand for ever and ever. AMEN.

SERMON XV.

1 JOHN, CHAP. IV. V. 16.

God is love.

INTRODUCTION.

It was a rash expression, which the unfaithful servant uttered against his Lord, when he said, "Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strewed; and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth; lo, there thou hast that is thine." Matt. xxv. 24, 25. The matter was briefly this: There was a certain rich lord, travelling into a far country, who divided his goods among three servants, that they might trade with them during his absence, and then deliver them to him with usury, on his return. Unto one of the servants he gave five talents; to the other two; and unto the third one. When the lord had returned from his journey, and desired to know of them, how they had traded with his goods; the one who had received five talents, to him he not only returned them, but also gave other five talents, which he had gained. The other, who had obtained two, not only delivered them up to his lord, but he gave him also other two, which he had gained; whereupon, both were commended by their lord, as good and faithful servants; and since they had been faithful in these few things, he made them rulers over many things. But it was different with the third, to whom the lord had given one talent; who, as soon as he appeared before his lord, and being accused by his evil conscience, uttered this rash saying, "Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown; and gathering where thou hast not strewed; and I was afraid,

and went and hid thy talent in the earth; lo, there thou hast that is thine." Hereby he was wont to excuse his unfaithfulness; he wanted to justify his idleness, his neglect, as an indolent servant, of his lord's goods, for his welfare. But the lord pronounced his sentence, "Cast him out into utter darkness, where will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Even as with this unworthy servant, so is it, not only with one man, but, alas! with many; yea, with the greater part, in relation to the great blessings, riches and favors of God, which God commits unto them bodily, but more especially spiritually. If man, if the sinner, if the unworthy servant does not regard the blessings, riches and favors of God; if he neglect the means of grace, and slights the day of his salvation; to work out his soul's salvation by the aid of the Holy Ghost, heartily and sincerely to repent, to believe on Christ, and through him to obtain the full forgiveness of sin of God, and in a word, to gain Christ with all his riches of grace; and he will, from his own conscience, or of others, in God's place be made say, Then shall our God be a hard man; then shall he gather where he had not strewed; then shall he ask more than man is able to comply with. Ah! it is said, who will observe all this? Who will do all this? Who can, who will stand before a righteous and just God? Who can endure his burning wrath? Lo, it is said, there thou hast that is thine.

If God is not satisfied with what I do, and what I am, I cannot help it: he is quite too hard, he requires to much, I am afraid of his anger and his indignation, I would rather let all things take their own course. O, wretched man, how far you may go to ruin? What exertions to screen your indolence, negligence, and indifference, to cloak your spiritual security. Is God a hard and indignant man to you? Does he require more from you than you can by his grace accomplish? He does when we look upon him and yourself only out of Christ. So is he unto you a jealous, a holy, and a just God, and thus you can never render a perfect obedience to his most holy will. But remember sinner, that Christ has fulfilled all for you on the cross; and that God's will, will be done by you, through him, if

by faith in Christ Jesus, God becomes unto you, a *good*, gracious, and *merciful God*, so that his wrath toward you, may be assuaged, and thus God become unto you a fountain of pure love. To the praise of God, and of our blessed Saviour, I exclaim unto one and all of you, in the words of the text: *God is love, God is love.*

Let us therefore, in contemplating these words, direct your attention to the following particulars:

DIVISION I. The person spoken of.

II. What is said concerning him.

Part first.—The person of whom the text speaks, is GOD: that Most High, perfect Being, who has been from all eternity of himself, and who will be from everlasting to everlasting. That which he is, *one* in *essence*, but *three in persons*, and possessing every virtue in the highest and most perfect degree, which he must necessarily possess. That God, who is the Creator, the preserver, and governor of heaven and earth, and of all things thereon, or therein. That God, who to reveal his divine perfections and virtues, created man after his own image. That God, from whom man departed, by the deplorable fall, and whom he thereby offended; whose judgments he brought upon himself, as also exposed himself to his just wrath, and indignation. That God, against whom the sinner, in his natural and unregenerated state, rages in dire rebellion, and offends presumptuously; against whom he conducts himself as an open enemy; from whom he has grievously wandered, insomuch that he enjoys no communion with him, and accordingly, has no right, while in this state, to anticipate any thing but banishment from his presence and eternal damnation. But amazing condescension! Of this God it is said, on the contrary, "*He is love!*"

Second part.—That God is in his very nature love, is easily conceived, as it is a self-evident fact, and need not to be wondered at. Because, as a most exalted and perfect Being, he must, and he really does possess all perfections; among others, the perfection or attribute

of *love*, in the most perfect degree. And moreover, if mankind were yet in the state of innocence, in which they were created, then it might not be wondered at, that God should love them. But as man by nature, is evil, perverse and depraved, and in a state of departure from him, he is an object deserving his just anger; because God is a God of holiness and justice, as well as love, grace, and mercy; and cannot exist without these attributes. But he now can, without doing the least violence to his unchangeable holiness and justice, yet exercise love toward hell-deserving sinners, and has hence, provided means, that they may, and can, be brought to love him. This is what exhibits the love of God to man, as *eternal*, *never-ending*, incomprehensible, and unspeakable. It is therefore, an unchangeable truth, that GOD IS LOVE, or that in God, there is an actual disposition, a cordial desire to promote the happiness of mankind. According to the different objects of the love of God, his divine love, is differently expressed. Inasmuch as he exercises love toward us, hell-deserving sinners, without any merit on our part; it is called *grace*. In relation to the deplorable condition, in which we are by nature, it is called *mercy*. And as God thereby confers favors upon us, it is called *goodness*. The love of God to man, in short, constitutes the source of our salvation, and is as such, an universal unfathomable, incomprehensible, and endless love. It is the greatest and the most transcendent, exceeding all things, extending over all, as it provides for *friend* and *enemy;* and in short, is the beginning and the end of all felicity. But how is God love? This is the important question, which we will now more closely examine.

God is love. Of this the whole creation, in general, heaven and earth, the sea and all that is therein, bear incontrovertible testimony. His love provides for the fowl of the air; it clothes the lily of the field; it feeds the young raven, that calls upon him; it makes grass to grow for the beast of the field; the young lions prowling for their prey, are also supplied. Not a sparrow can fall to the ground without his will; it directs the moon to divide the year; by it the sun knows his set-

ting; it creates darkness, that it becomes night; by it the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; by it the "stork knows her appointed time, and the turtle, the crane and swallow, observe their time of coming." In a word, it is love alone that causes him to "open his hand and to satisfy the desire of every living thing." Psalm cxlv. 16.

God is love. Whereof mankind bear witness. And first, generally, in temporal things. All things, O privileged man! All that thou art, that thou hast, or yet mayest obtain from God, all comes from the unspeakable love of God. By it thou wast wonderfully made in the womb; and equally wonderfully wert thou brought to the light of this world. It gives thee food and clothing, and its superintendence preserves thy breath. By it, thou art *invisibly clothed*, as well as Adam, thy ancestor, and his wife, were *visibly clothed*. It moistens the mountains; it makes the land abound with fruit, which it creates; by it, corn and grain grow for thee, that thou mayest have bread from the earth, that wine may cheer thy heart, and oil make thy face to shine, and bread to strengthen thee. It giveth thee health and strength, or it visiteth thee, with good and evil, by both to draw thee by love. By it, thou art permitted to increase in wealth, or to become poor, just as it may seem best to it, for thy good. It has numbered all the hairs of thy head; nothing, no, not the least thing befals thee, without its will. In short, thou hast to ascribe all to the love of God, that thou enjoyest here.

God is love. To this, men bear the most decisive and most cordial testimony, especially, in things spiritual. If God would have dealt with us according to our merits, and would have recompenced us according to our misdoings; if he would have permitted his holiness and justice to lay hold of us, we would have all been lost, and perished eternally. No creature, no angel, no man could have ever helped us. But God, who saw before hand, that man, and with him, his posterity would fall, through the subtlety and seduction of Satan, and not being willing that his design, which he had in the creation of man, should be frustrated, provided already in eternity, before the foundation of the world;

an expedient to redeem the poor sinner, by which he might be restored to his former state of favor, and to his fellowship; yea, made much more happy than before. It was his love, the eternal, gracious love of God to men, that provided for thee, Jesus the Son of love, to be a Mediator, Saviour and Redeemer, before thou wast in existence, or hadst a being, in the eternal counsels of God. It was this love which revealed and made him known to thee, in the first promise; had him made known by the holy patriarchs, and prophecied of by the prophets, and had him prefigured by sacrifices and ceremonies of the law. Yea, it was this eternal and gracious love of God, which sent Jesus, the Son of his love, for thy sake, in a despised form of a servant, into the world, made him subject to the law, exposed to all kinds of scorn, mockery, ignominy, contempt, hatred and persecution, and gave him over to the most excruciating and painful sufferings; yea, even gave him over to the accursed death of the cross. And all this the Saviour, Jesus did and suffered, out of unspeakable love toward thee. And in this respect, the love of God is a universal love, and God is love toward all. The mediatorial office, the suretyship, and the precious ransom of Jesus, is of such infinite worth, that you may all be redeemed and set free thereby, if you lay hold of it, by sincere repentance and vital faith. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotton Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John iii. 16.

God is love. This is evident, and manifested further, in the manner and way in which God calls and invites man, in Christ Jesus, to his fellowship, and is operating on his soul, in respect of which, the love of God is universal and incomprehensible. Arise, sinner, whoever you may be, and say, has the love of God not revealed itself to thee in this respect? Has it not followed thee from thy infancy? Has it not frequently, all the day long, stretched out its hand after thee? Didst thou not at least, here and there, feel something within thee, that might have given thee occasion to seek the grace of God, by repentance and faith, in Christ Jesus? What were, what are crosses, tribulations and

adversities which befal thee? Why did God lay thee on a sick bed? Why has he visited thee with sickness and a feeble constitution? Why has he called thy best and nearest friends from thy side? Why did he suffer thee to sustain loss in this or that temporal good? or why has some other misfortune happened thee? What is it that disturbs thee inwardly, that is to thee, very often as a gnawing worm, that disturbs thee by day and by night, so that thou canst not even sleep by night, that accuses thee so that thou hast neither peace nor rest, that again and again convicts thee of thy misery? What is it, O sinner, but the eternal compassionate love of God; the Spirit of love, desiring to lead thee to repentance, and through faith, to bring thee unto Christ? What can be greater love than when the Lord commands thee saying, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." Isa. xlv. 22. "Return, thou backsliding Israel," saith the Lord, "and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you, for I am merciful," saith the Lord, "and I will not keep anger forever." "Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God." Jer. iii. 12, 13. "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways, for why will ye die, O house of Israel." Ez. xxxiii. 11. "How shall I give thee up Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim? Mine heart is turned within me; my repentings are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger; I will not return to destroy Ephraim, for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of Israel." Hos. ii. 8, 9. "Turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning, and rend your hearts, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness." Joel ii. 12, 13. "And he that thirsteth, saith the Saviour, let him come unto me and drink." John vii. 37. "He that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." John vi. 37. "I came to seek and to save that which was lost." Luke xix. 10. No greater love

toward hell-deserving sinners can, therefore, be imagined.

God is love. Whereof the sinner gives testimony, who has been effectually called; has become truly penitent, truly believing, and fully assured of the forgiveness of his sins, and adopted into the fellowship of God, and endowed with the gifts of the Holy Ghost. Which itself would merit an entire discourse, if justice should be done to this highly interesting subject; but, at present, let what has been said suffice, and let us come to an application of this matter.

APPLICATION.

God is love, he manifests nothing but grace and mercy towards hell-deserving sinners in Christ Jesus, the Son of his love. Behold, O man, how he hast sustained and led thee by his endless love. It was this that bestowed upon thee, the innumerable blessings in things temporal, which thou hast enjoyed; but more especially was it, through this, that he has crowned thy life with spiritual blessings. Knowest thou not what God requires? Yea, what thy own eternal welfare requires of thee?

Shouldst thou not have suffered thyself to be drawn by love? Would it not be easy for thee to lay hold of the endless goodness, grace, and mercy, which is afforded thee in love; yea, eagerly, and with both thy hands? Shouldst thou not instantly accept the precious pledge of eternal love,—Jesus the Son of God, thy Saviour and thy Redeemer: shouldst thou not long since, have embraced him with the arms of faith,—by true and sincere repentance, and have applied his merits to thyself, in order to be secure from the wrath to come? Shouldst thou not, long since, have complied with the terms of the gospel, since thou hast been called and invited in love? I speak of those who are not yet united to Christ Jesus, by true repentance and living faith.

Notwithstanding the unspeakable love, of which thou, O wretched man, has been the partaker; thou art still going on in the same course of sin and iniquity, in which thou hast so long continued. Thou still re-

fuseth the invitations of God, although he draws thee in love! Thou art still in the way of sin, which leads to eternal damnation! Thou hatest God and thyself in thy heart; yea, thou even hatest thy own salvation! All the goodness, grace, and mercy, which are offered thee, hast thou hitherto rejected and despised. Then thou hast, if not in wardly, yet with thy conduct, fully made it manifest. All the favours thou hast received from God, thou hast repayed with a shameful ingratitude, and hast rewarded love with hatred; friendship with enmity. And indeed thou hast not regarded the greatest, the unspeakable favor,—the precious pledge of the endless love of Jesus Christ, who manifested so much love for you in his suffering on the cross! Him thou hast wholly set aside. Thy best friend and lover,—God thy Saviour,—thou hast despised, yea, in truth, hast thou behaved thyself toward him, as a gainsayer, and followed those who are thy enemies! Thou hast loved that which hateth thee, and hast hated that which loved thee, and notwithstanding thy ungratefulness, loves thee still. O, that this were the happy hour; the blessed moment—when thou wouldst be convinced in love! Consider, I pray thee, what will be the consequence, if you wholly reject and utterly despise the proffered love! Judgments, temporal, may befal thee, and if these will not be effectual, eternal judgments, will assuredly overtake thee! Oh, cast thyself to day, into the arms of eternal love, that thou mayest escape the wrath to come! Submit to the drawings of heavenly love; and let thy heart be melted in warm tears of repentance, at the feet of thy Saviour. Follow the inward voice, that even now calls, and strives to move thee, and come to the source and fountain of love. God is love. Think not hard of him, harbor no thoughts that he is unmerciful. Let not thy sins, thy hitherto manifested enmity, or thy unfaithfulness, keep thee away from him. He loves thee in truth, and is waiting an opportunity to let thee experience his grace. No, bow before him, trusting alone in Jesus, the Son of his love, nothing doubting, and thy salvation is certain and infallible. God is love: think not that he will be hard with you, or that he will require too much from you.

O, no; his grace will make thy journey easier, much easier, than thou doest imagine; he requires nothing from thee except thy heart; all these requirements has Jesus wrought out for thee. Dost thou say that thou dost not feel any reciprocal love to God? Only contemplate the goodness, patience, long-suffering, and forbearance of God, in not ere this, cutting thee off, as a vile cumberer of the earth, and me thinks thy heart cannot fail to love, and adore this merciful and gracious being.

If God loves the unreconciled sinner, how much more strong must be his love for those, who have submitted to him? How precious must be the enjoyment of those who believe? One glimpse of his countenance, fully repays for all the tribulation and temptations his children are called to endure. It gives renewed courage to struggle and to fight, and to press with more earnestness towards the kingdom of heaven. O, my christian hearer, examine, and prove thyself well; see if thy heart has submitted in love to God—to him who loves thee, with a tender love, and draweth thee unto him, out of goodness and mercy. Love has drawn thee, love has led thee, love has borne thee up. Goodness, grace, and mercy flowed from him toward thee. Be ashamed, if you love any thing more than God and Jesus; or if you prefer any thing before them. Be ashamed, if thou hast been detained, by any thing from pressing to the centre of this love. Acknowledge thy sinfulness, follow the drawings of love, and renounce all rivals. Be not disheartened, if thy love be not so perfect as might be desired, still let it be sincere. Think often how thou hast been drawn, led, and upheld by the love and mercy of God. This will influence your love. Render thanks and praise unto the Most High: this will nourish thy love. Cast thyself wholly into the ocean of divine love, this will secure thee from all the hatred and persecution of the enemy! Let thy love be pure. Be of a good conscience, of unfeigned faith. Let thy love be strong,—strong as death, its jealousy as cruel as the grave; the coals thereof as coals of fire, that many waters may not quench it. Abide in love—then wilt thou abide in God and in Christ. For God is love. AMEN.

SERMON XVI.

GENESIS, CHAP. XV, V. 1.

I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.

INTRODUCTION.

It was an inexpressibly great favor, of which the children of Israel had occasion to rejoice, on their journey out of Egypt, to the blessed land of Canaan: when the great angel of the covenant, the Son of God, who in the fulness of time, as the promised Messiah, was to appear in the world, going before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them in the right way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go before them by day and by night—and not to depart from the people, until they are landed safely in the promised land. I say, it was an inexpressibly great favor, for if we consider the circumstances, in which this people were immediately on their leaving Egypt, and in which they were afterwards placed—we shall find them sorrowful and difficult in the extreme. Scarcely had they left Egypt, until that son of perdition, the hardened Pharaoh, brought all his forces out to force them back into their former slavery. They had the Red Sea before them, and behind them were the whole forces of the land of Egypt, and according to human appearance they had naught to expect, but a cruel death and destruction. But, behold, what a mistake! The angel of the covenant, in the fiery pillar, interposes himself between the host of Israel, and the Egyptian, and protects them, that not a hair of them should be molested; the obedient sea, at the nod of the Almighty, opens a secure passage in the deep; Israel passes through with dry foot, and it immediately afterwards swallowed up the

pursuing Egyptians with boisterous rage in the vast deep. This tumult to be sure, was over; but now they had a vast wilderness before them; where hunger and thirst, where ravenous beasts and many other perils awaited them; whither should they look to? Who was to conduct them? Who was to point out the way to them? God took it upon himself, the angel of the covenant went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them in the right way, and by night in a pillar of fire, that they might go in the right way by the light thereof; he watched over them, protected and preserved them from every danger, provided for them, and maintained them in every misfortune, till they finally landed in the land of promise, and had been richly rewarded for all their sufferings.

My friends, in this we have an agreeable shadowing forth, a charming representation of the providence, of the mighty help, protection, and assistance, which God, which Jesus Christ the Son of God bestows upon all his children at all times. When a soul, by true repentance, comes out of the spiritual Egypt, out of sin through the wilderness of this world; and enters upon the way to the heavenly Canaan, he is constantly with it, he is a light to it upon its way, he leads it in even paths by his Spirit, protects and succours it from all the spiritual enemies of its salvation, preserves it from their subtle snares, watches over, and guards it against its bodily enemies, and finally brings it to the happy possessions of the heavenly Canaan, to the enjoyment of all the blessings of heaven, where he will richly recompense them for all their sufferings on their journey thither. This is what the Lord assured Abraham, the father of all the faithful, when he says in the words of my text, "I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward."

Connection.—Abraham had lately returned from a bloody transaction. There were several allied kings of that country, who warred against the king of Sodom, and his allies, who conquered him and took possession of Sodom, and led captive all; also, Lot the son of Abraham's brother. Abraham arose, on hearing this intelligence, armed his servants, and surprised the kings

by night, conquered them, and rescued all, together with the goods and other captives, and Lot his brother's son. He did not keep any of the booty for himself; but gave all again to the king of Sodom, except that he gave to Melchisedeck, the king of Salem, the priest of the Most High, the tenth, and to those who were with him a portion for their labor.

This circumstance might have easily occasioned a fear in Abraham; that those kings whom he had conquered, might revenge themselves on him. But the Lord assured him of his protection, and as he had been so disinterested, and kept back no part of the booty for himself, that he would richly reward him. "I am, says he, thy shield and thy exceeding great reward."

CONTENTS.—Wherein is contained, an assurance of the mighty protection, which the Lord grants to all his children, and the glorious recompense of his grace, which he bestows upon them. Introduced as a ground of comfort to all the children of God, in all their temporal and spiritual necessities, tributations, and temptations. We will consider,

DIVISION I. The person speaking here.

II. The promise given.

First part.—The person speaking in the words of the text explains himself by the word, I. The same person calls himself JEHOVAH: or the *Lord* in the same verse, and is the second person of the Trinity, the Son, the once promised Messiah, but who having appeared in the flesh, and suffered for sin, has risen from the dead, and ascended into heaven, and is sitting at the right hand of God, as the Lord, the Messiah, Jesus Christ. For it is he, to whom the Father has committed the economy of grace, and has made him a mediator between God and fallen man. It is he who effectually calls his children, as he did Abraham, out of Ur in Chaldea, out of the kingdom of Satan, and of the world, and brings them on the way to the heavenly Canaan, in the way to the blessed fellowship with God, yea, really brings them into the enjoyment of it. It is

he, who assists them, who leads them, governs and directs them, who protects them against all their enemies and against all obstacles that may present themselves in their way. He succors, and preserves them, and presents himself, as their reward of grace. Therefore, he testifies of himself: *I am thy shield.*

Second part.—Shields were among the ancients, a kind of armour, which they had fastened on the left arm, and managed thereby to protect themselves against arrows, thrusts and cuts of the enemy. The Son of God, is very frequently set forth in the scriptures by this emblem. It is hence written, "Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee? O people, saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency!" Deut. xxxiii. 29. And David saith, "My defence, (shield,) is of God, who saveth the upright in heart." Psalm vii. 11. And Ethan saith, "For the Lord is our defence, (shield,) and the Holy One of Israel, is our king." Psalm lxxxix. 19. And here the Son of God, is called a shield; or rather, he calls himself so, and that in relation to his regal office: since he not only calls his children effectually by his word and Spirit, out of the kingdom of sin, of Satan and darkness; but he protects, and succours them in the state of grace, against every danger. For even,

1. As a shield was formerly used to cover and to protect the body, and to keep off every deadly arrow from the body, even so as a spiritual shield, Christ protects all his children from incidental danger in the time of trouble, "For he hideth them in his pavilion." Psalm xxvii. 5. "He hideth them in the shadow of his hand." Isa. xlix. 2. When a soul is brought to a true knowledge of itself, by the light of God's Spirit, when it sincerely repents; when it sees the abomination of sin, when it sensibly feels the wrath of Almighty God; it is Jesus, who then as a shield covers such a soul; he takes upon himself all the arrows of divine wrath; he steps into the poor sinner's place; he appeals to the time when he bore the wrath of God, in his own body on the cross, for the sins of the whole human race, and does not only turn him from sin, but

God also changes his wrath into tender love, into paternal compassion. When Satan shoots his fiery arrows, upon that soul, while leaving his kingdom, the kingdom of sin, if he, I say, shoots his fiery darts; and when Satan accuses that soul, with the multitude of its sins; of its total unworthiness; when he represents that God, as too holy and just to receive it, and that consequently, it cannot obtain grace, but must be eternally damned; when, he, I say, tempts a soul with such representations, and tries if possible, to bring it into despair; Jesus it is, who supports a soul in such circumstances, who covers it as a shield, who sends back all the darts of the enemy without effect, who makes them blunt, so that the devil, can do no harm to a penitent soul, with all his infernal raging, if it seeks aright to keep close to Jesus, and seeks to cover itself, under this spiritual shield: for he will never suffer that infernal wolf, to tare such sheep out of his hand: and if he is before it as a shield, none can be against it. Even as,

2. Soldiers could formerly depend on their shield, thus may believers, with much more propriety, depend upon Jesus, as their spiritual shield. For as he protected them in the beginning of repentance, when they first went out from the kingdom of darkness, into the kingdom of light, thus he will also further grant them this inexpressible favor, and at all times, in the progress of a state of grace. He always extends his hand over them, and overshadows them with his wings. He preserves them, from the seductions of the world, from the allurements of sin, from the enticements of the flesh, and from the temptations of Satan, their enemy, that should they, through mistake, be entangled in the world, and yield to the enticements of sin, of the flesh, and the temptations of Satan: should it so happen, that they are hit, with one of his darts, he wards off every danger, as also the wrath of God, from them, overrules it so that they recover themselves, behind him, as their spiritual shield, so that they are again reconciled with his heavenly Father, and henceforth cling more closely to their spiritual shield, in order that they may not be so readily wounded. And should Satan let other darts loose upon them; should he attempt to ensnare them

with doubt and unbelief; should he attempt to make their repentance, the forgiveness of their sins, the righteousness of Christ, the fellowship with God, and eternal life: in a word, should he attempt to dispute their being in a state of grace, Jesus it is, who catches all the fiery darts, of the evil one, who, in spite of him, assures such souls of all pertaining to a godly life; and he will stand by them, that they may overcome and subdue all the allurements and temptations of Satan; that they may strive to walk in the light, as God is in the light; that they may be filled with that comfort and joy of the Holy Ghost. Then it may, of a truth, be said, "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" Even as,

3. One, if he is desirous to be secure, behind a shield. has to use it properly: also, must he, that would have Jesus, for a spiritual shield, and be protected and preserved, from the darts of the wrath of God, from the fiery darts of Satan, from every temptation of Satan, of the world, of sin, and from tribulations; he must, by all means, lay hold of Jesus by a true and living faith, without which, none can ever comfort himself, with the glorious benefits of Jesus, the spiritual shield, of his children. For as long as man lives impenitent, and in unbelief, without God and Christ, so long as man surrenders voluntarily to Satan, the world and sin, man lives in harmony with him, because he does their works, and has no desire to be succored and protected by him. Man is a subject of Satan's and the kingdom of darkness, consequently he need not flatter himself, with the protection of those, who belong to the kingdom of the Lord Jesus. For if we refuse him submission, we need not await his royal protection; but expect to be treated as enemies of his kingdom, and to have the just penalties of his laws inflicted upon him. He who would have Jesus as his spiritual shield, and enjoy his royal protection, must, by all means, strive to become a subject of his kingdom, and receive him by true and living faith, in sincerely repenting, and obediently submitting unto him as his Saviour. Such an one may look for every necessary protection and assis-

tance; not only to be protected against the enemies of his salvation—against Satan; against the world, and sin, in all spiritual temptations, but also against all his bodily enemies, temporal tribulations and calamities.

This is clearly contained in the promise which he made to Abraham, and all true believers. Jesus is also a shield unto his children against bodily enemies and tribulations. The word of God, and experience, give us glorious proofs of this. Who protected Jacob against Esau? Who watched over Joseph in prison? Who preserved Moses while a child? Who preserved David against Saul, in so many tribulations and calamities; that he could joyfully say, "I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about." Psalm iii. 7. Who protected Elias, Elisha, Jeremiah and others, against their temporal tribulations? Who sheltered Daniel in the Lion's den? Who watched over Shaderack, Meschack and Abednego, in the flames of the fiery furnace? Whom had the disciples, the apostles and innumerably many others, for their shield, their protection and assistance? Indeed, the whole world cannot do any harm to a child of God, nor molest a hair of his head, without his will. Those who have Jesus for their shield know it, to their satisfaction, by many proofs of themselves. "When a man's ways please the *Lord*, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." Prov. xvi. 7. And where this is not the case at all times, he succors and protects them securely, so that their enemies can never do them any harm, but are obliged to keep within bounds. But should it happen, that he should suffer his children to be under the will of their enemies, for a time, it only is for their good, yet he watches over them, and he will finally deliver them out of all their tribulations.

This is not all of which the children of God have to rejoice. He is not only their shield, their protector and succor, in temporal and spiritual tribulations; but he is also their reward; *and that their exceeding great reward.*

We generally call that a reward which is offered for doing certain labor, and which is given to him who does that labor. If any one does labor when he is not

obligated to do, but which he does voluntarily, and after the labor is done, receives the worth of his labor, that we call reward. But it is not so between God and man, especially since the deplorable fall. God requires the sinner to repent, and afterwards to be obedient, and to do his most holy law and will; and promises to reward him in the forgiving of his sins, with righteousness, with his fellowship, and eternal life. But as we are absolutely bound to do so, and it is our duty to do that which God desires us; so likewise we, when we shall have done all those things which are commanded us, we are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do. Luke xvii. 10. But instead of doing this, "in many things we all offend." James iii. 2. Since our doings, in this life, never come fully up to the divine prescriptions, and if we have advanced ever so far in holiness; yea, we can bring forth no fruit without the power and assitance of God. 1 Cor. iv. 7. Therefore, all is a pure reward of grace, a pure recompense of grace, which the Lord grants unto his children here, and in eternity, as a reward.

This reward, this recompense of the grace of God to poor sinners, comprehends the greatest and most precious pledge, which is in heaven, namely, the Son of God, Jesus Christ himself. *I*, therefore, said he to Abraham, I AM THY REWARD. Again, he is the point and source of every good, of every favor which God bestows upon the needy sinner. If a soul turn unto him, by sincere repentance and true faith, then he bestows himself to that soul, with all his purchased benefits and favors; he plucks it from the kingdom of Satan, and reconciles it with his heavenly Father, so that it receives the full forgiveness of sin, and enters into the fellowship of God. If a soul, then, by his assistance conforms to the laws of his kingdom; if it follow him in his footsteps, in the obedience of faith; then he imparts himself, the longer, the more powerful unto it, so that it finally will be wholly implanted in him, that it will be one with him; he fills it wholly with the rich blessings of his house, and waters it with heavenly joy, as with a stream. He is its reward, for he purchased all that

which it receives. Here in this life, he is but in the beginning, for it will only receive its perfect reward of grace, in the life to come, where he will make it perfectly holy, happy, righteous and blessed.

Hence, with propriety, it is called, an *exceeding great reward.* Can we imagine a greater recompense of grace, than this of which believing children of God become partakers in Christ Jesus? Christ, the Son of God, and beside this, God himself will be their reward. He becomes their reward without merit; yea, contrary thereto; for if God would deal with mankind, according to their merits, and recompense them according to their deserts; their reward would be eternal damnation. That he now does grant unto all, who, by his grace, turn unto him by repentance and faith, and who walk in his ways, such glorious blessings and favors; yea, makes them partakers of himself, may this not be called an extraordinary great reward? Yea, indeed it may; one that cannot be uttered, much less to be meditated. That God and Jesus Christ should make hell-deserving children of the devil, blessed inhabitants of heaven—may this not be called an exceeding great reward of grace? Yea, verily, it is impossible to estimate it, as it is exceeding all human reflection. Here is fully confirmed, what the Lord assured, namely, "I have never said unto the seed of Jacob, seek ye me in vain;" and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Heb. xi. 6. For he will not let his children go unrewarded; and if it is not by merit, it is by grace; therefore the reward is the greater, and the more glorious, which they receive. Ah! how much inferior the world is, with all its tatters and rags—with its filth! O! assuredly a true child of God, be he ever so poor in this world, is far richer in God and Christ, than one who is rich in the world; but who is poor, yea, miserable, blind, naked and bare in sin. For what is the reward of the world and of sin, but death, hell and damnation? Whereas, on the contrary, life, heaven and eternal happiness, are bestowed upon true believers. Children of God are well aware of this; therefore, they call with Asaph, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and

heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever." Psalm lxxiii. 25, 26.

APPLICATION

What now, my friends? Can you find any thing more worthy of love than God—than Jesus? Do you know of a more mighty, a more faithful, a more stable friend than he is? Who is a greater benefactor? Who is a more noble rewarder of his children than he is? Where is there a Lord; where is the king, who takes better care of his subjects, who protects more fully, who watches over them more faithfully, and preserves, than He? Where is the father, where the mother, that provides more richly for their children, and grants them favors, than He? Of whom may we expect greater recompense, greater benefits of grace, contrary to all merits, than of *Him?* With whom are we secure, and better protected, than by *Him?* Is the devil so kind to his slaves? or is he not much more the contrary? Does not the world frequently chastise its children with poverty, scorn, and many other things? Have you ever seen the devil rescue his devotees from the gallows, the wheel, the *axe, (gulletine,)* the pile,* and from other imminent dangers? Yea, the black miscreant rather rejoices greatly, that he has thus prepared the roast, to feast on him eternally in hell, where he will fully give him his well-merited reward. Now, as God, as Jesus, is to his children all in all; should we not, then, seek to enter into their fellowship? Should it not be the chief concern of man, to secure the aid of the Lord Jesus, his succor, and protection, and his help? Should we not seek to secure his happiness in the all-sufficient Saviour, and to have it well-founded in all eternity? Should we not strive to promote it, to live according to his laws as faithful subjects to live before him, since he rewards us with many good things, out of pure grace? Or do we not stand in need of him! Or can we protect ourselves, make ourselves happy? Yea, we are here much more deceived, lost and damned. How thoughtless, how

* The various modes of executing culprits in European countries.—Translator.

foolish, how inimical man acts even against himself, if he neglect the time of grace; if he lives continually in the world without God and without Christ. For, verily, to be impenitent; to live in prevailing sin; in all manner of ungodliness, and without God and Christ in the world, are one and the same thing. That is raging against himself, bringing his own damnation upon himself.

Would to God, my brethren, you were all in the fellowship of God and of Christ. Would to God, you could all depend upon Jesus as your spiritual shield, and be assured of being rewarded of him by grace. But as long as it is not the case, I have to tell those among you, who are not yet in the fellowship of God and Christ, I must then say plainly, of the truth and bring it home to their consciences if possible, that they may perhaps ask themselves and by the grace of God, begin to think differently. Be it known therefore to you, who are impenitent, who are of the kingdom of Satan living in darkness, that you have no part nor lot in Christ, and that you are not under his protection, much less, can you comfort yourselves with his rewards of grace. What think you will become of you, when you appear at the judgment bar of God? How will you bear the arrows of the wrath of God, being without Jesus? Who will shelter you, succour, and protect you, being without this spiritual shield? Have you not to expect, that the wrath of God, will burn upon your heads, in the nethermost hell? For, how will you escape from the devil, and from hell, or avert the fiery darts thereof from you? Think you, Jesus will protect you, say on, how can he? You will not suffer him, by his grace, to disengage you from the chains of Satan, and to deliver you from sin; you are determined not to submit to his protection; if you are, you are indifferent about living according to the principles of his kingdom and walking according to his laws, which is necessary, if you wish to comfort yourselves with his protection. Therefore, arise! arise! O! ye insecure of Zion, and be warned in time to flee the wrath to come. Arise, and follow the call of God, while it is to-day. O, come in a knowledge of your lost condition, to him who had been so

graciously waiting, and who has arisen to have mercy on you. Come, with a contrite heart, come with a hearty desire, come with prayer and supplication. Then, then you shall be received into his fellowship, and be made happy. The Almighty will be your shield, he will protect and succour you in every need, in death. The Lord himself will be your reward, here in time, and in eternity.

But you who have accepted the call of God, and have commenced to come out of the kingdom of Satan and of darkness. Fear not, the Lord is your shield, he will succour and protect you, against all your enemies. Depend only on Jesus, as your shield, continue steadfast in faith. He will not forsake you, nor neglect you, he will preserve and keep you. Be not afraid, but be faithful until death. Your faithfulness shall not be unrewarded, here you shall have an antepast of happiness, and finally you shall receive the reward of grace, the crown of righteousness. May the Lord grant us this unmerited grace, for his mercy's sake! AMEN.

SERMON XVII.

LUKE, CHAP. XIV. VERSE 16—21.

A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: and sent his servant at supper-time, to say to them that were bidden, come; for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. So that servant came, and shewed his Lord these things.

INTRODUCTION.

"Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost, as your father's did, so do ye." Thus my audience, runs the just reproach which the first martyr, the holy Stephen alleged against the Jews, as we read, Acts vii. 51.

The Jews were formerly a people, whom the Lord chose as his own peculiar people, passing by all other nations upon the face of the earth. They enjoyed also such prerogatives as placed them far above others. They bore visible signs and seals of the covenant of grace, the sign of circumcision on their own bodies, and the Holy Ghost was without intermission, engaged among them, through holy men, to place them in such a condition as to their souls, that they would not only bear the signs and seals of the covenant of grace visibly, but that they might become partakers of the spiritually signified and sealed benefits of the forgiveness of

their sins, the righteousness of the promised Messiah, and of eternal life. Yea, the Lord, the Messiah himself, in the days of his flesh, exerted himself herein, and his apostles for some time after his ascension.

However, not all they who were the seed of Abraham, therefore, were the children of the promise. The lesser number of them were children of the covenant, of the covenant of grace: for the greater part of them had nothing but the outward signs and seals thereof, which of themselves can save none. They were indeed circumcised according to the flesh, but remained uncircumcised in their hearts, were, and remained natural men, given over to the love of the world and all manner of vice. The Spirit of God was engaged to rescue them from this unhappy condition: however they were stiff-necked, and malicious; they not only turned a deaf ear to the friendly callings, but they resisted them; gave his blessed operations no place in their souls, but drove him away from their hearts, by force. Thus did the fathers, the greater part of them, who lived before the coming of Christ into the flesh: and the greater part of the children, of those who saw Christ in the flesh, follow the footsteps of their fathers. They as uncircumcised of heart, gave no heed to the sound of the gospel, rejected all the offered means of grace, of the new covenant, as well as the means thereto, and resisted the operations of the Holy Ghost, whereby they stood in the way of the salvation of their never-dying souls.

Verily, a lively representation of every, and each natural man. The gracious God, who has no pleasure in the death of the sinner, but that he turn and live, offers, wherever his word and gospel are known among men, unto all, his grace and the blessings of heaven; and he invites thereto, in the most friendly manner: however many, and indeed the greater part are so hardened in their natural depravity, so entangled in the love of the world, so suffocated with the views of the world, that their ears are stopped to the friendly invitations of the gospel, as the serpent to the voice of the enchanter; that they prefer the husks of this world to

the blessings of the kingdom of heaven, and rather go down to hell on the black road of vice, than through repentance and faith, to enter into fellowship with God and Jesus Christ, and thus openly resist the Holy Ghost. There is a plain representation of this in the words of the text.

In which are noticed, several reasons, as being so many hindrances, whereby man deprives himself of the benefits of the covenant of grace, consequently his soul's salvation, regardless of the friendly invitations of God, of his word, and of the preaching thereof.

The whole is set forth, under a parable of a certain man, who prepared an excellent supper, and requested all the previous invited guests by his servants sent forth, to attend which we will consider by the assistance of divine grace. Let us notice:

Division I. The preparation of this great supper, and the invitation thereto: and then consider,

II. The consequences and the effect on those invited, and on those who were sent out.

First part.—It is said, *There was a certan man*, whereby we have none other, to understand, but God, the Heavenly Father himself, as he has revealed himself out of mere free, endless, and unmerited goodness, grace, and mercy, as a benefactor of mankind, and stoop unto them in the most condescending way.

When unthinking man was deceived by Satan, and cast himself into the deepest abyss of destructive misery, and brought upon himself, all manner of temporal and eternal punishment; God then, the precious and gracious benefactor of mankind, had again mercy upon his poor and needy creatures, who could have never helped themselves to all eternity; and before the foundation of the world, hit upon such measures, in the councils of his peace, whereby the acursed sinner might again be restored, and be brought to the enjoyment of the chief good, in his fellowship. Hence it is said of this man, of the gracious God himself: *that he prepared a supper.*

This supper, which is taken from the custom of the ancients, who were wont to treat each other friendly, and sumptuously at evening, at the close of a day's labor, represents all what God did, that pertains to the plan of the salvation of the needy. The spiritual and heavenly blessings of the New and eternal Testament of grace; Christ with all his purchased riches and blessings, the full forgiveness of sin, righteousness and eternal life. Which things are compared to a repast, because they alone serve as spiritual food to the nourishing, and satisfying of the never-dying soul, being by means of the spiritual hands of repentance, and conversion, received and enjoyed by a true and a living faith in Jesus Christ, as the spiritual mouth of the soul, and more especially a supper, because the benefits and blessings were fully purchased by the Son of God, Jesus Christ, at the evening of the Old Testament, and prepared to be enjoyed. And also, because they are fully enjoyed at the evening of this life, in the heavenly wedding hall, after much trouble and labor in our earthly pilgrimage; especially at the evening of this world, the soul will enter into union with the glorified body to enter there fully to enjoy.

And with propriety it may be called a *great* supper. For the benefits and blessings which God confers, or is ready to confer, upon the needy sinner in Christ Jesus, and the spiritual food of the soul, which is served up here, are of such costliness, that it is impossible to value them; for they far exceed all the riches of the glory, which, worlds compared thereto, are as filth and mire. And they are so numerous and of different kinds, that they may in this respect be emphatically called a *great* supper. For they are suited to every case, and if any one be ever so painful and loaded, be he ever so miserable and poor, be he ever such a great sinner, yea, as Paul confesses himself, be he the greatest sinner: yet he may come and be refreshed, satisfied and become rich in all things. And not less do these things deserve the name of a great supper, partly on account of the multitude that are invited thereto, partly on account of the great number, who actually appear at the supper, who feed their souls on spiritual food, and are

satisfied with heavenly blessings; for there are souls from every kindred, nation, language, and Gentiles. From the east and the west, from the north and the south, there are guests.

So excellent and exalted are these things of themselves; so excellent and exalted is their author, namely, God; it is he who prepared this great supper. Nature itself teaches us this; for as they are all heavenly things, even so they can have no other source, inasmuch as he is the source of all good; the giver of every good and perfect gift. None other could do it but God; for none can by any means redeem his brother, nor give God a ransom for him; for the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth forever. Psalm xlix. It was a divine work to devise means to redeem fallen man from the vengeance of Satan and of hell; to cleanse them from sin; to make them meet for the fellowship of God. What flesh and blood could have never devised; nay, not in all eternity, that God did, in his Son, in whom, and by whom he redeemed the needy sinner, to forgive him his sins, to sanctify him, to cleanse him, and renew him, according to his image, and to give him to enjoy the riches of his all-sufficiency, here, in time, and hereafter in eternity.

He is both the author and the offerer of these heavenly blessings. *And bade many*. This invitation of God, to the benefits of grace of the Lord Jesus, took place immediately after the lamentable fall, by making the covenant of grace, in the promise of the blessed seed of the woman, and was first made by God himself, and afterwards he availed himself of the services of the patriarchs, Moses and the prophets, to invite so much, and for such a long time, to this spiritual supper, until the time and hour thereof, itself approached. For at the hour of suppertime he sent out his servant.

The hour of the great supper is the time of the New Testament, when Jesus Christ appeared in the world, when in him all things were consummated necessary for the salvation, comfort, and satisfying and delight of the needy sinner. Though the faithful under the Old Testament did all drink the same spiritual drink, out of that spiritual rock, and were thereby sa-

ved, yet it happened not otherwise than by representation, because he had not yet come, who was the Lamb of God, to bear the sins of the world, and had not yet been slain. But when the hour had arrived of this great supper, *then God sent forth his servant.*

This servant was in the first place John the Baptist, the harbinger of the Lord Jesus, whose voice was, as of one crying in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make his paths straight: Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matt. iii. He was followed by Christ himself, who is most emphatically called a *servant* in the scripture. He again had *his* servants, and "gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry; for the edifying of the body of Christ." Eph. iv. 11, 12.

These all taken together make but one servant of God, if they have the true object in view; for they attend with Christ, their head and Lord, the only servant of God, in one and the same office, namely, to gain souls, to invite the children of men to the great supper; to enjoy the spiritual food of souls; the benefits of the kingdom of heaven. They are sent forth to the *invited.*

The *invited* are all mankind, to whom the word of God is published, and the gospel of Christ is preached; but at that time the Jews were the people. For these had, for a long time, been invited to the great supper of the Lamb, by Moses and the prophets; and were directed to the spiritual food of the soul by the Lord, the Messiah. But as they only enjoyed these in the type, there was to be told unto them, *that all things were now ready.*

The preparation of this *great supper*, to the salvation of the poor sinner, to the blessings, the riches and benefits of which he was to be made partaker in Christ Jesus, had its beginning immediately after the deplorable fall, in the promise of the blessed seed of the woman, and was continued by the glorious representations, in all manner of offerings, washing and cleansing, especially, under the Old Testament, and finally, came the time that all *things were ready*—the blessed seed of

the woman—Jesus Christ, the true antetype of all offerings and of types, actually appeared in the flesh, "that through his death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their life time subject to bondage." Heb. ii. 14, 15. By him an end was made to transgressions and sins; he made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness. Dan. ix. By him we are redeemed from the curse of the law, he being made a curse for us. Gal. iii. All things were therefore ready; all that was lost in Adam was again restored by Christ; there is not any thing wanting to a divine life. Hence, it may be said, with emphasis, "Eat, O my friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved. Cant. v. There was a perfect refreshing with flowers, and comforting with apples Cant. ii. Then it was said with emphasis, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." Isa. lv. 1. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. xi. 28. "I am the bread of life; the living bread, which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever, and the bread that I will give him is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world; for my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me." John vi. All things are ready; there is nothing wanting, on the part of the sinner, but *to come;* for the servant was directed to encourage those invited, and to say to them *come.*

It is required *to come*, that we learn the place, where we have hitherto been, and that we enter upon the right way, if we desire to reach the place we have in view. Even so it is in spiritual things. If the sinner desires to obtain an interest in Christ Jesus and his purchased blessings, riches and benefits; if he desires to refresh his weary and panting soul with the heavenly manna—the spiritual food of the great supper of the Lamb; if he desires to obtain the fellowship of God and be made happy; he must forsake the state of nature, the king-

dom of Satan and of darkness, the unclean resorts of sin, and the ungodly abodes of unrighteousness and vice; he must come out therefrom; yea, come out of himself, deny with his whole heart, all *self-love*, with all that is in, or pertaining thereto, and come naked and helpless unto Jesus, to the treasures of his divine and all-sufficient grace. He must come in the way of true repentance and conversion; he must know, and sensibly feel his misery; be heartily sorrowful on account of sin; and humbly acknowledge his iniquity before the throne of grace. The sinner must come by a true and living faith, with confidence wrought within him by the Spirit of God, lay hold of Jesus as his Saviour, and open his mouth wide that Jesus may fill him with himself and all his riches and benefits. The sinner must come unto Jesus, not only as his high priest, in order to be redeemed, washed and purified from sin, and made meet for the fellowship of God; but he must also come to him as his prophet, and teacher, and king, in order to be further instructed by his Spirit; to be directed and governed, and led in an even path; and by denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, that he may be enabled to walk in the word according to the mind of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Jews, the ancient people of God, were especially invited in the text, that they might know Jesus Christ, the promised of God to the fathers, who had been typified as the Messiah, to redeem them from sin and the burdens of the ceremonial law of Moses.

Second part.—Let us examine the consequences which all this had, and still has: *And they all with one consent, began to make excuse.*

Man by nature has such a hard heart, and is so entangled in wickedness, and love of the world, that without a powerful drawing of God, all attempts to reform him are in vain. Men, sometimes see the excellency and value of the blessings of the kingdom of heaven, and feel that they are indispensably necessary to their happiness; but they make little or no exertion to attain to the enjoyment of these things. Man, of himself, has not courage to proclaim war against the kingdom of Satan. He loves sin too much; the vanities of the world are yet

too precious to his soul to be renounced. And Satan never is more busily employed, than when there is an opportunity presenting itself to escape from his soul-destroying influence. He calls into exertion all his devilish powers, to retain the soul in his chains; yea, more and more to entangle it. Then man begins to *excuse himself;* then all kinds of futile excuses, are advanced for not coming unto Jesus. The chief of them are mentioned here.

The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused.

Properly speaking, the chief of the Jews are represented hereby, who, as great, rich, and mighty Lords, had, as it were, purchased the fertile fields, the possessions and the government of the land of Canaan. In the eyes of those, the humble, the meek, and lowly Jesus, with all his doctrines, was an insignificant and despicable person; they disdained to acknowledge and to receive him as the promised Messiah, foolishly believing that he would appear in the world with great splendour and majesty. In this respect, these haughty Jews, are representatives of all who cleave with all their minds and affections, to the things of this world, to its riches and perishing honors. By their undue care for the things of sense, all good affections are choaked within them, as also the seed of the word of God; the call to this great supper of the Lamb; the blessings of the Lord Jesus, find no place within them; and indeed there is nothing so detrimental to the salvation of man, than an undue desire for the things of this world. These are the unhappy thistles and thorns, that never suffer the genuine fruits of repentance and conversion to spring up in the soul. The reason is obvious: man imagines that his earnest attention to worldly affairs, is right and proper, and that he ought to be excused, if he cannot find time to come unto Jesus, and appear at his spiritual supper, there to refresh his soul with the rich provisions of heaven. This is one of the chief excuses, advanced by the impenitent, for not coming unto Jesus; others, though open hearted and candid in many things, will not acknowledge the influ-

ence of worldly concerns, and when pressed to come, barely reply, "I pray thee have me excused." Yet this is only one kind; of others it is said, "*I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused.*" By these we have properly to understand the Jews in general, and particularly so, as they clung with all their heart to the outward services of God, to the ceremonial law of Moses, to offerings, washings, and purifyings, so that they were kept off thereby, from the easy yoke of the Lord Jesus; from the true and only antetype of all these things, by rejecting the body of the reality of these things, and retaining the shadow thereof; and excused themselves, that they did not appear at the great supper of the Lamb. They are to this day representatives of those who are satisfied with external services, with a bare nominal christianity, and are so stiff and determined on those things, that they imagine that they have done sufficient thereby; that they do not stand in need of such a close union by faith with Christ. For if man only cleaves to these externals, it is again a great hindrance to him to break fully through into the kingdom of God; because he is of opinion, every thing is well with him, because he depends wholly upon externals, and his poor soul is panting and perishing amid all his imaginary abundance. This kind of people also consider themselves excusable before others, and you offend them highly, if you endeavor to pull down their airy castle. Because they think that they have already been with Jesus, or at least because there can be nothing wanting unto them according to their way; although beside externals, a penitent heart, and living faith are required; as also an interest in the benefits of grace of the Lord Jesus. And if they have attended to it long enough, they say or think, and this very heartily too, "I pray thee have me excused." Yet we have a third class, and indeed among all others it is the worst. It is said,

And a third one said, "I have married a wife, and therefore, I cannot come." By these we are in general, to understand all carnally-minded Jews and christians. Men who live according to the evil lusts, and desires of their hearts; follow after them with a loose

rein, and wallow, like the unclean swine, in the filthy sink of sin, and all manner of vice. To them Satan has insuperably obstructed the way to Jesus, and to the benefits of his grace. These are persons, who have scarcely any feeling, and who live in all manner of ungodliness. If the enormity of their depravity, the heniousness of their vices and the impossibility of their escaping eternal destruction, is made known to them, they are not the least affected thereby. If the amiableness and acceptableness of the Lord Jesus, the invaluable benefits of his grace, are ever so convincingly recommended, if they are ever so much pressed thereto, yet all is in vain, they do not even excuse themselves as others. In short, they will tell you, "I have married a wife, and therefore, I cannot come."

What are the consequences and effects with those who are sent with messages to such people? The text continues, *So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things.*

God is an omnipotent, and omnipresent God; he seeth into the very depths of the heart of man; nothing can be hidden from him, for all things are naked and open to his eye. If his servants by his assistance have done their duty; if they have executed their embassy, and all will not avail, nevertheless they draw nigh unto God in prayer, complain to him of the great perverseness, stubbornness and contumacy of those, to whom they had been sent, and commit all to his Most Holy will, to do what seems good to him according to his great wisdom, and if this is the case, the condition of those who reject the calls of the gospel, must be deplorable indeed, for the prayers and sighs which arise unto heaven, from faithful servants of God, and make known the rejected graceof God, must bring down upon the heads of those who reject the offered mercy, the frown of his offended majesty.

APPLICATION.

Behold my friends, these are the lamentable causes, the fatal obstacles, whereby men are kept back from coming unto Jesus, by true repentance and a living faith. Notwithstanding all the pleasing and friendly invitations of

God, his word and preaching thereof, still the impenitent sinner is kept from enjoying the purchased benefits of grace and salvation, and consequently deprived of his soul's salvation. He is therefore to be blamed, because he casts himself voluntarily into ruin: for as long as he is stubborn, and uncircumcised in heart, so long does he resist the Holy Ghost, and casts all admonitions, warning and threatenings, behind him.

Let us therefore, examine our hearts and see how we have conducted ourselves hitherto, in relation to these things. None can say, that the Lord has left any thing undone on his part. No, this gracious God did all things for us, that could promote our happiness. We have his precious word, in which as well as in sermons, his grace with all its purchased blessings, riches, and benefits, are offered unto us, in the most pleasing, and friendly manner possible; and we are most effectually admonished to appear at the great supper of our heavenly Father. The sacrament of the holy supper, which Jesus Christ instituted for that purpose, is to serve us as a visible assurance,—a precious pledge and seal, that he does truly feed our souls with his body and blood; with his purchased benefits, treasures and blessings, and that he actually did, as truly as we have received the blessed bread and wine, in his remembrance, suffer and die for our sins.

What effect has all these friendly invitations,—these agreeable and tender calls of God, had to induce you to come to the great supper? Have you been persuaded to live according to the commands of God? Have you appeared at this spiritual supper? Have you forsaken the state of nature,—the kingdom of Satan and of darkness? Have you come out from the world and denied yourselves? Have you entered on the way of true repentance and conversion? Have you a true and saving faith by which to fly to Jesus for refuge,—to lay hold of him, and appropriate him to yourself, and are you assured, that you have an interest in him? Do you heartily desire after the true food of the soul,—after the blessings and riches of the Lord Jesus? Do you rightly hunger and thirst thereafter? Have you shown by your conduct that you are Christ's and that

you have fellowship with him? Are you led, and governed by him, and do you strive to conform to his laws? What does your conscience say to these things? Oh, how feeble are the accusations of conscience! Do you not feel afraid when such interrogatories are put to you? Are you not thereby affected? Or have you lost all sense of feeling? Then it may, indeed, be more deplorable among you than it really appears. Once and again you have been invited to the great supper, yet you have not come. Jesus has for a long time offered you pardon through the riches of his all-sufficiency; yet, you come not; and it is no wonder. Your hearts cleave to the world; its husks are your only delight. You have an undue concern for the things of the earth; ye are ensnared by prohibited cares; so that you take little or no time to think on the welfare of your souls, or satisfy the desires thereof. If you do attend to religious duties, you make them a secondary concern. But you are more apt, wholly to neglect them, or rest satisfied with a mere attendance to external religion, you take care perhaps not to commit gross immorality, and then flatter yourself that you have done all that is necessary: or of the rest wish to be excused. But do you think that this will pass with God? Do you think God will excuse you in that day, when you will be wont to say, we have a large family, we have many children, we had an extensive business to attend to; we had to see that we passed honorably through the world, and were anxious to be able to leave something for our children. Ah! these excuses will not stand the test!! Believe it not, that your external religion, or the external duties of christianity, will be sufficient before God. Would to God there were no other reasons among many of you, that keep you from the great supper; from the enjoyment of the benefits of the grace of the Lord Jesus, than the cares of the world. But alas! many of you, especially among the youth, are wholly given up to the lust of the flesh, whose midnight sins cry to heaven. I verily believe, that the drunkards, the voluptuous, and other carnally-minded men, do not desire to come to the great supper, to the enjoyment of the blessings of the grace of the Lord Jesus; for they

well know themselves, that these holy things are not for dogs; that these precious pearls are not to be cast among swine; they delight more in their sinful cursed life, than in the fellowship of God in Christ Jesus, where the flesh, and the desires thereof must be crucified. No wonder that the sacrament of the holy supper which sets forth, seals and imparts the benefits of the blessings of the Lord Jesus, are so badly received. I have had the sacrament twice here, and with God's will, shall hold a third, the ensuing week. But what is the reason that but few have yet appeared at the Lord's table? What is the reason? Have you this or some other doubt? Why have you so little confidence to make them known, that we might meet them by the word of God? Dare you live in enmity with any one? Why are you not reconciled? Certainly, under such circumstances, you can never be true christians; consequently there is no other reason why you do not come to the Lord's table, than that you well know, that you are yet in an unconverted state; and therefore you consider yourselves unworthy thereof. Since it is so, it is much better that you absent yourselves; and we admonish every impenitent one to do so. But why do you not strive to be converted, that you may become worthy thereof? Why do you not pray God to give you for this purpose, strength and grace? Why do you continue sinning? Why do you love the world unlawfully? Why are you always carnally-minded? Why do you always live at variance, and in enmity with your fellow-men?

Dare you think that I speak too *hard*, and too long: show me the contrary; show me that you are converted, and I will heartily rejoice, and praise God with you. But in this matter, you may say and think what you please—I care little about it. As a servant of the Lord, I will discharge my duty. Though I depend upon you for my maintenance, yet I care not for your money, but am solicitous for your souls, in order that I may save my own.

We will, by the grace of God, celebrate the Lord's supper, on Friday next, being the blessed birth-day of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and I most solemn-

ly invite, not those that are impenitent, earthly and carnally-minded; but such as are penitents and believers. Therefore, arise, and come to Jesus, to the great supper of our heavenly Father: come as penitent sinners; acknowledge the multitude of your sins; repent of them with godly sorrow; pray to the All-merciful God for forgiveness and grace. Then you shall live; yea, then you shall live, here in time, and through all eternity. AMEN.

SERMON XVIII.

LUKE, CHAP. XIV, V. 21, 22.

Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.

INTRODUCTION.

"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things that are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are," (things that appear to be something.) 1 Cor. i. This, my friends, is the language of the apostle Paul.

If we have not thus to understand it as though the wise, the mighty, and the noble of the world, were excluded from God, and the blessings of grace of the Lord Jesus—for experience militates against that which teaches us that there is at least a general and external call to all men, and that all are encouraged by the word of God to accept the terms of the gospel. But we have here only to understand that the wisdom, the power, and the nobleness of the word are an impediment to their salvation; inasmuch as they depend on those things, and that they engross their hearts, minds and affections, and cause them to depart from, and finally, to forsake the true wisdom which cometh down from above, unto sal-

vation; from the power which we have to use to gain heaven, and from the true paths of virtue and godliness; whereby they stand in their own light, that they only become partakers of the external, and not the internal powers necessary to salvation.

God is no respecter of persons, and he deals with all according to his own good pleasure. Neither the supposed wisdom, nor the power, nor the nobleness of great things, can induce him to be merciful without complying with the terms of salvation; nor can the things which appear weak and ignoble to the worldly, incline him not to accept of them most mercifully. In these things he acts diametrically opposite to the course of the world; yea, he that desires to rejoice on account of the grace of God, the riches of heaven, and of his salvation, must renounce every earthly power and consideration; he must renounce every noble thing of the world, and be delivered from all undue use of the things of the world, and his senses must be led captive to the obedience of faith. He must learn to know his own folly, acknowledge his own weakness, and appear in the poverty of the spirit before God. Let his imperfections be what they may, be they ever so great, these are all nothing; for the Lord will have us there to take refuge in the riches of his divine all-sufficiency, and enjoy the riches of his grace. Such he has chosen, such he particularly invites, he will supply the imperfections, the wants, and the feebleness of such, to make them strong and powerful unto eternal life.

The words of our text give us a plain instance thereof: Wherein it is shown how God bestows his grace, and the blessings of heaven, upon those who feel their impotency, their wants and infirmities, and who are desirous to enjoy them, although they are not unfrequently despised by the wise, the mighty, and the noble of this world, by earthly and carnally-minded hypocrites and sensualists.

Since the whole matter is represented in a parable, we will therefore examine,

Division I. The commission which a certain lord gave his servant, and

II. The account which the servant gave his lord after attending to the commission.

First part.—God, who is rich in grace and mercy, is represented to us, in the preceding part of the parable, as a man who made a great supper, as he has made rich provisions of blessings in Christ Jesus, to make him perfectly and eternally happy. But, as the invitation to this spiritual supper, as we showed in our discourse on Sabbath last, was rejected by the obdurate Jews and carnally-minded persons, who follow their foot-steps; it is said,

Then the master of the house, being angry. God, who is represented as "a certain man," in the beginning of the parable, but here as "the master of the house," is a supremely great and perfect Being, and always happy in himself. We cannot ascribe to him the passion of anger, as it is common with man. The figurative mode of speech here used, is to be understood, if, in a manner, becoming God, as his holy and righteous will to punish evil, and visit with righteous judgment those who have abused his divine majesty. Nothing can offend the divine Being more; nothing merits his punitive justice so richly, as the rejection of the blessings offered by Christ Jesus, on futile excuses, which are nothing less than an avowed contempt thereof, and a trifling with the goodness and long-suffering of God; thus wantonly, treasuring up unto himself "wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God." Rom 2. Then God, who is righteous, gives over unto their own imagination, such as despise and reject his glory and his invaluable blessings, and bestow their affections upon others. If earthly and carnally-minded men despise the riches and blessings of the kingdom of heaven, and will not come to enjoy the spiritual food; then he charges his servant,

"*Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.*". The proper sense of this passage is: After the great and chief among the Jews, as carnally and earthly-minded, and with these in general such as, with all their hearts, blindly adher-

ed to the ceremonial law of Moses, had despised and rejected the means of grace; then these means are, in a special manner, proffered to publicans and sinners, who feel themselves spiritually poor, crippled, maimed and blind. As the Lord Jesus brought it to pass in Jerusalem, as the gospel history amply teaches us, that those who followed him, who were his audience, were for the greater part such men as were of low degree, and despised by the world; this was the case in relation to his disciples and apostles.

But, as the true disposition of such is indicated as are effectually called to enjoy the great supper of the heavenly Father, and who are actually invited to participate in the blessings of the grace of the Lord Jesus, it becomes us, under existing circumstances to examine more closely into the disposition of those persons. For we must not imagine that this must be literally understood. No: the *poor* here are, the spiritually poor; persons who sensibly feel and know their spiritual impotency and unworthiness to do any thing good; yea, feel their many wants, and together with all their self-righteousness, the great imbecility of their understanding, of their will and affections; souls who can discover within themselves no faith, love, hope, patience, devotion and other blessings of the covenant of grace, who feel these things with the greatest degree of anguish. They are such persons who are in the first degree of true repentance and conversion. For, when a person becomes acquainted with himself in the light of God's word, which is the first step to a true change of heart; he discovers in himself nothing but the greatest poverty and want; that he has come far short of the glory of God. Rom. iii. That his mind cannot comprehend the things of the Spirit of God; that they are foolishness unto him, and that he cannot discern them. 1 Cor. ii. That he is unable, either to will or to do; yea, that he is dead in trespasses and sins, and that he has been deprived of all that could supply his great spiritual wants and necessities. These are the broken spirits and the contrite hearts which God will not despise. Psalm li. 17. Such a person seeks his righteousness, by true faith in Jesus Christ alone, and resorts to the treasures of the Redeemer's

all-sufficiency, to obtain pardon and eternal life. Those who are poor in spirit, are also called the

Maimed and halt.—They are such as deny themselves; who cut off their offending hand, or foot, and cast it away; that is, they resist, by the grace of God, the sinful lusts and affections of their hearts, whereby their bodily members may be unlawfully used to do sinful actions. They are such therefore, as go out from among the world, and no longer conform to its sinful practices, but who deny themselves all evil works; therefore the world considers them as frail, miserable, and despised. There are others under the same circumstances, who consider themselves as maimed, and halt, and as spiritually poor; because they feel unworthy to walk in the ways of the commands of God, and who are working out their soul's salvation with fear and trembling; because they are sensible of their own insufficiency. Both are consequences of true spiritual poverty. For as he who is spiritually minded seeks, by the grace of God, to deny himself, and to avoid every thing that occasions spiritual poverty, namely, sin, and the lusts and temptation of sin; he also knows and feels the entire inability of his own strength, to devise other methods. Both, therefore, are motives, to induce him to go to the fountain of salvation, to the physician of Israel. Hence also, the

Blind are added. The spiritually blind in the strictest sense, are such, as have no knowledge of God, of his ways, and of themselves. But we cannot extend thus far here; for by the spiritually blind here, we have at least to understand such as have begun to have a light of saving knowledge of God, and of themselves; yet, in such a manner that they thereby begin fully to know their spiritual blindness; that they begin rightly to know how much they are lacking of saving knowledge, and how far they are yet from beholding the Sun of Righteousness. This, therefore, is a part of the true poverty of the spirit. For hereby a person knows and feels the great blindness and ignorance of his understanding, and his inability to see the wonders of God in his law. In short, they are those to whom, has not yet arisen, the light of a true saving faith; and with

whom a living faith is as a covered fire; so that they cannot, as yet, look upon Jesus as the author and finisher of faith: but they are invited to come, that they may get eye-salve.

Second part.—On these and the like souls, the proclaimed and offered blessings of grace, and the favours of the Lord Jesus, have a different effect from what they had on the earthly and carnally-minded. Therefore it is said, *Lord it is done as thou hast commanded.*

There can be nothing more acceptable to a sinner who is pressed down with a load, and distressed on account of sin, than the invaluable riches and blessings of the Lord Jesus, as they are spread before his eyes, when offered unto him, in a friendly and affectionate manner. Unto such an one, it must be joyful news, a precious balsom upon his head, wine and oil to his wounds, his stripes and his sores. He accepts joyfully, the gracious invitations of Jesus to the blessings and means of grace. He ardently hungers and thirsts after spiritual food and heavenly blessings. As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth his soul after God—his soul thirsts for God, for the living God, after Jesus, the fountain of life. Then he arises, without delay, and comes to enjoy the great supper; being encouraged by power from on high, he presses forward through every hindrance. Being clothed with spiritual pinions from on high, he flies into the arms of the faithful Saviour. He opens wide his mouth, that Jesus may fill it with himself. In the enjoyments of Emmanuel, he forgets every worldly consideration, and seeks only to find enjoyment in him.

When faithful servants of the Lord see such fruits of their labours, such consequences of their mission, they approach God and say, *Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded.* The souls thou intendest to refresh with the means and blessings of salvation, have accepted thy friendly invitation through us; they have came,—they are actually present,—they are waiting thy promise! And Jesus the chief servant of the house of his heavenly Father, how does he rejoice, if he gains such souls! Then he approaches as a faithful, as an all-powerful advocate to the Father. My Father, he exclaims, *it is*

done as thou hast commanded. Souls have been gained for thee and me; souls have obeyed thy divine call, and have attended thy great supper; they are poor, they are feeble, they are blind, they need thy help; therefore, grant them the blessings and favors, which cost me so dear, which I have purchased with my precious blood. Then Jesus gives himself, unto such souls, as spiritual food. He bestows himself with all his means and blessings of grace. "Eat, it is said, eat, O friends; yea, drink; drink, abundantly, O beloved." Cant. 5. He will clothe them with the garments of salvation; he will cover them with the robe of righteousness; he will make them wise unto salvation; he will enlighten their understanding, that they may discern the things of the Spirit of God; that they may see the wonders of the law of God. He sanctifies their will, that they may only do the commands of God. He so constitutes them, as to enable them to live and do good, and walk with delight in the ways of his statutes with joy; that they may rise as on eagle's wings, walk and not become weary, and faint not. He bestows the gold of faith, that they may walk in the light, as he is in the light, and have fellowship with him.

Notwithstanding the bountifulness of the Heavenly Father, and the Lord Jesus, to such souls, yet the treasures of his divine all-sufficiency, are never exhausted. Many more may satisfy and refresh their souls. Therefore it is said, "*And yet there is room.*"

The riches, the goodness, the grace and mercy of God is so endlessly great, and the precious merits of the Redeemer of man, are of such an extent, that those can never be exhausted, nor this impaired. Unnumbered souls have come to Christ, and yet there is still room for others. This divine fountain of life will never be exhausted; but the more that thirsty persons attend, the stronger it flows to the salvation of indigent sinners. *Yet there is room.* The number of souls who seek and find salvation in the Redeemer, is far less than it ought to be, for the sake of their own salvation, many more ought to come. "For many are called but few are chosen." Mat. xxii. 14. There are but few who come unto him as poor, maimed, halt, and blind. *Yet there is room.*

As long as the sinner lives in this time of grace, as long as it is called to day; so long they have access. As long as this earth, and men who need redemption, are in existence, so long Jesus will continue to be a Saviour and Redeemer of needy sinners. But after this life,—after the general judgment, there will then be no more room. Then the door of grace,—the door of the marriage hall will be closed, and no foolish virgins will be any more admitted.

APPLICATION.

Now, my friends, here you have the disposition of those who are invited to the Lord's supper, to enjoy the means and blessings of the grace of the Lord Jesus, to receive the forgiveness of sin, righteousness and eternal life. For the supper which was ordained by the Lord Jesus, has the outward signs and seals thereof; yea, it actually imparts them to those, who receive it by faith. And he that can comfort himself, with the benefits of the grace of the Lord Jesus, as the spiritually represented and sealed benefits—he dare not hesitate to approach the outward signs and seals, in order to have his soul nourished with the true body and blood of Christ. These are the souls of such as ought to appear there. We do no expect perfect souls—for these are not to be found, in this state of imperfection. If they are but spiritually poor, maimed, halt, and blind, they are still welcome. But, if one has already begun to be strong in the Lord, such an one, may the more joyfully come unto Jesus, and be refreshed anew. And there will never be wanting defects in the spiritually poor, which will make it even necessary to be strengthened and refreshed anew.

And as it is our intention, to appear to morrow, at the table of the Lord Jesus, to be visibly assured of his benefits of grace. How is it with our souls? Have we the necessary qualifications of worthy guests of the Lord Jesus, and is our disposition such as is requisite thereto? Well let us institute an examination! Are we truly poor in spirit? Do we know and feel the

many imperfections, to which we are subjected by nature, the blindness of our understanding, the unholiness of our will, the total perverseness of all our affections? Do we know and feel ourselves as spiritually maimed and halt, as imperfect and unable to perform the great work of our own salvation? Do we know and feel our spiritual blindness, yet so, as to have the least spark of true faith, and the least hope of a living and saving knowledge within us? And to examine those who having had already appeared at the Lord's table. How have you conducted yourselves since? Have you sought to become rich in Christ? Have you attained a readiness? Have you been industrious? Have you been assiduously engaged in doing good? Have you increased in faith and saving knowledge? And what is still more necessary, do you still feel your great imperfection? And do you notwithstanding know yourself as spiritually poor?

Were I to ask one after another, to be sure I would hear you all say, Yes! Yes! we are miserable, frail, blind; we are just as you say. But, alas! this is not the question; but the question is, Do you sensibly feel it? Are you of a contrite spirit, of a broken heart? Are you solicitous to be released therefrom; and are you in the beginning of true conversion? For it does not depend upon knowing, but there must also be a feeling sense thereof, to show itself, by a true change of heart. But those of you who have been for a long time in a state of grace, are but few, or must be unknown to me. Would to God, that you all were in a state of true repentance and conversion, and were assembled here as spiritually poor, and impotent; then I would salute you all as true guests of the table of the Lord. But I greatly fear that you are not all such, and that you in part stand in danger of approaching the table of the Lord unworthily; or at least, without receiving the proper benefit thereof. There is indeed a respectable number of guests assembled here; but yet there is room; there still might be many more—perhaps they will be like those who bought land, oxen, or taken a wife, and begin to excuse themselves, or that they cannot come—perhaps they may also consider themselves as unworthy:

well, let us pause till they enter into themselves, and till the Lord brings them forward. But I fear that among this small number, there are many unworthy guests.

I am not here to make any one faint hearted, or to deter any one, but much less to kiss you and take you up into my arms and make you secure. I will do my duty, and warn every one from receiving unworthily this holy supper. The rest is left with each man's own conscience. What you, therefore, are wanting, you must strive for by the grace of God. And, O! do it without delay; do it in the present hour, if you have not yet. Let my discourse have free course among you—and seek to possess the true qualifications of the worthy guest of the Lord Jesus. Cast yourselves at home upon your knees in secret, and pray God that he would give you strength and grace thereto, and by his assistance, become spiritually poor. Come to a true feeling, a knowledge of your spiritual wants, your spiritual insufficiency—look at yourselves by God's holy law, as in a mirror—there you will see the evil you have done, and the good which you omitted, if you compare your life and deportment. Let your hearts be touched, and endeavor to feel that you are extremely wretched, frail and blind, and thereby moved to take refuge in the great riches of the grace and mercy of God, in Christ Jesus. Pray the Lord for eye-salve, for an enlightened understanding—for a saving knowledge of him and yourselves. Seek for the merciful, paternal heart of God, seek to touch the loving Saviour of sinners. by representing your true case. If you cannot find words suitable thereto, send forth ardent groans heavenward, and be earnestly resolved, by the grace of God, to shun all manner of sin, to avail yourselves of every opportunity, to flee from it—that you do, at least, no more sin knowingly.

Attend to all this, and if you have been truly converted, or have made considerable progress therein—be ever mindful of human frailties and imperfections—know your own wants and weaknesses—humble yourselves before God—pray to him for the forgiveness of your sins, and be not unmindful of your secret faults.

Supplicate his forgiving mercy, that he will not, for Christ's sake, impute to you the sins you have hitherto been guilty of. If your heart be wrung with anguish, especially you who have to seek, by the grace of God, first to become spiritually poor, be of good cheer—think that Jesus has invited the poor, the maimed, the halt and blind. Take refuge in him by faith—appear at his table, and he will feed you, and give you drink to eternal life. AMEN.

SERMON XIX.

ACTS, CHAP. ii. VERSE 1—4.

And when the day of Penticost was fully come, they were all with one accord, in one place; and suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

FIRST INTRODUCTION.

"I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say." This, respected audience, is the glorious promise which the Lord made unto Moses. Ex. iv. 12

The Lord God had called Moses to speak in his, the Lord's, name to Pharoah, that he would suffer the children of Israel to go and depart from their bondage. Moses excused himself by saying, that he was not a man of eloquence, but slow of speech, and slow of tongue; that he could not plainly set forth, and readily make known, the matter. But the Lord answered him, that he had made man's mouth; it was he that made the dumb speak—the blind see; that he would be with his mouth, to promote the message, and to teach him what to say. But, as Moses made another apology, the heaviness of his speech was not removed, on account of his mistrust; but God gave him Aaron, his brother, to be his mouth.

There is no doubt, my friends, but that there is something of a mysterious nature in the whole life of Moses, as is the case in the instance before us. Since Mo-

ses, as the Mediator, by whom the law was given, when considered in all things, the heaviness of his tongue may represent, that we cannot be justified by the law, or thereby be enabled to approach God with joy; that under the law, every mouth must be stopped; and, that we cannot receive the Spirit by the works of the law, but by faith, through preaching.

And, indeed, that which was not fulfilled in Moses, was fulfilled in the spiritual redemption through Christ, in his disciples and apostles; these were to proclaim the word of their Lord and Master, to kings and Gentile nations, and make known his church as a promised inheritance to the world. When they were called and sent forth, they had a like promise made them: I will be with you, saith the Son of the Most High; I will be with you, that is, with your mouth, and teach you what ye shall say, even to the end of the world. And this promise was remarkably fulfilled on this day, the day of Penticost; the Lord was with their mouths; he taught them what to say, when he poured out his Spirit upon them so profusely, that they were filled therewith, and spake in diverse languages, declaring the great wonders of God.

We will speak of this miraculous outpouring of the Holy Ghost, as we are assembled, to-day, to celebrate the Lord's supper, by considering the portion of the word of God before us.

ACTS, ii. 1—4.

And when the day of Penticost was fully come, they were all, with one accord, in one place; and suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind; and it filled all the house where they were sitting; and there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

SECOND INTRODUCTION.

Respected auditory! remarkable and mysterious was

that vision of Isaiah: "In the year that king Uzziah died, there he saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple." Isa. vi. 1.

Without doubt, the Lord, who is here mentioned, is none other than the great, the true and eternal God, who is called ADONIA and JEHOVAH, which are his names, and are not given to any other. And especially it must be so understood here, as he is one in *Being*, and triune in *Person*, namely, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and in this vision, there was not only the Father, and the Son, but the Holy Ghost also, who with the Father and the Son, is alike the eternal God, and of one Being, in which the apostle Paul confirms us, when he expounds this chapter, by the Holy Ghost. Acts, xxviii. 25.

Of this Lord it is said, that he sitteth upon a throne, high and lifted up; and we might very properly hereby understand the angel of the covenant, who, after having finished his surety-ship, after having accomplished the redemption, sat himself upon the throne of majesty on high, which his Father allotted him, after having conquered, and so much the more, as it is said that his train filled the whole temple whereby we have not only to understand his providence, but his governing and reigning over his church.

Nor does this prevent us from understanding, by the train of his garment which filled the whole temple, the benefits and blessings of the Lord Jesus, which he purchased as mediator, namely his Holy Ghost and the gifts thereof, which he has sent down, and poured out upon his church, which is represented by his temple. A truth which we find alike prefigured by the ointment of Aaron, of which David speaks, "It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garment." Psalm 133. And this is the more probable, in relation to Christ; for in him all fulness should dwell. Col. i. Of whose fulness we may receive grace for grace. John 1.

In a word, the excelling of the church of the New Testament, was made known to the prophet by this vision, that there would be a time when the train of

the government of Christ would fill the whole temple, that the Lord Jesus by virtue of the promises made by him, would in the fulness of time, send down his Spirit from his Father, and richly fill his spiritual temple, pour down his Spirit upon his children in streams like water, and it has also been accomplished in the fulness of time, as may be seen from the words just read in your hearing.

CONTENTS.—The text contains a particular description of a remarkable out-pouring of the Holy Ghost upon the apostles, and the operations thereof, namely, the gifts to speak diverse languages, to teach the people, to the end introduced and mentioned by Luke, to convince every one, Jesus still lived, and was exalted at the right hand of God.

CONNECTION.—In the preceding chapter, Luke describes the ascension of Christ; on which occasion, his disciples were present as witnesses; he also relates the appearance of two men clothed in white raiment, who instructed them as to the purposes of Christ's ascension. The disciples return immediately to Jerusalem, the place where the promised dispensation of the Holy Spirit was to be fulfilled. Being solicitous that the vacancy occasioned by the defection of Judas, might be supplied, they proceeded afterwards to the election of a person to fill it; and the lot fell upon Matthias. As they continued in prayer and supplication, Luke gives us to understand, it happened quite unexpectedly, that as they were yet with one accord in one place, "*suddenly there came a sound*," *&c. &c.*

In considering this, we will have to notice,

DIVISION I. The miraculous out-pouring of the Holy Ghost, and

II. Its miraculous and powerful operation.

First part.—We have again to notice in the first part,

I. The occasion on which, the Holy Ghost was poured out.

II. The out-pouring itself.

I. The occasion on which the Holy Ghost was poured out, is particularly described in verse 1. *And when the day of Penticost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place;* where we will consider,

1. The persons.

2. The time.

3. The place.

4. The description, or conditions of the persons.

1. The time when the Holy Ghost was poured out, was when the day of Penticost was fully come, namely at the day of Penticost, which was the tenth after the ascension of Christ.

This feast was one of the three great annual feasts, which the children of Israel, were solemnly to celebrate according to God's appointment, and took place fifty days after the PASCHA, or Easter-feast, at which Jesus arose from the dead; hence it has the name Penticost, being taken from the Greek, which properly means *fifty days*, and on which account it is also called the feast of *seven weeks*. Deut. xvi.

It was not without cause, that the day of Penticost, was selected for the descent of the Holy Ghost, in a miraculous manner, upon the apostles, for on that day, the children of Israel were, by the command of God, to bring to the Lord the first born, and first-fruits, as a voluntary offering, in order that the whole earth might be thereby sanctified, and thus Christ, on that day, poured out his Spirit upon his disciples, to offer and sanctify, and dedicate them to his heavenly Father, as the firstlings of his church; in order that by their services, in preaching the gospel, the whole world might be led to God, and made to believe and be sanctified unto the Lord. Moreover, it happened on this day, because on it, Jerusalem was thronged with Jews and proselytes from all regions, far and near, and in such a manner, as that the unheard-of miracles, accompanying the out-pouring of the Holy Ghost upon the disciples,

might, not only be made known in Jerusalem, but throughout the whole world. Thus Christ himself, frequently came to the feast at Jerusalem, for the purpose of making known his wonders and signs unto all, in order to bring forth the more fruit; as we learn from John ii, v, vii, x, xii, and in the conduct of Paul. Acts xx.

2. And this, as may readily be supposed, happened at Jerusalem, where the disciples were commanded to be assembled, and to remain there, and not depart thence; (Acts i.) whither they had gone after his ascension; verse 12; and they were there, confidently waiting for the fulfilment of the promise. And this was also to take place in Jerusalen, because it had been predicted long before; "for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." Isa. ii. Yea, the Lord sent forth the sceptre of his kingdom out of Zion. Psalm cx.

3. This miracle happened to those, who were all with one accord in one place, according to Luke's statement, no doubt, these were the twelve apostles, though it might possibly be, that the *one hundred and twenty* were present, who are mentioned in the *first* chapter; inasmuch as not only the apostles received the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, as may be seen by the case of Cornelius, with many others. Acts x. 11.

4. Be this as it may, it is certain, it was those of whom it is said, *They were with one accord in the same place.* They did not contend who should have the preference; but sat together in brotherly love and union. They were as one heart, one soul; they all looked for the promise, and simultaneously prayed to God for the fulfilment thereof. In them was verified the saying, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! Psalm cxxxiii. This was the promise made by Christ: Where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them. Matt. xviii.

II. As these were together with one accord, the promise of sending the Holy Ghost, was fulfilled: "*And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rush-*

ing mighty wind, and it filled the house where they were sitting"

When kings and princes of the earth, at any place enter a town, it is customary for them to be preceded by the sound of drums and trumpets, and hence it is not a matter of astonishment, that the Lord our God, or his Spirit, when he descends in a special manner into a place, and makes his appearance, that he should make known his approach, or appearance by remarkable signs. Thus we read, when he descended upon Sinai to give his law, "that there were thunderings and lightnings; and the voice of a trumpet exceeding loud." Exod. xix. But the appearance of the Lord unto Elijah is remarkable, namely, when the Lord appeared unto the prophet. "The *Lord* passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and broke in pieces the rocks before the *Lord;* but the *Lord* was not in the wind; and after the wind, an earthquake; but the *Lord* was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the *Lord* was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice;" in this the Lord was. 1 Kings xix. Which signs preceded the appearance and presence of the Lord, to his disciples, for there was fire seen, and the rushing of a mighty wind was heard.

The Holy Ghost is frequently described in scripture, as a wind and breathing of the Lord. Thus it is said of Jesus: he breathed on his disciples, and said unto them, receive ye the Holy Ghost. John xx. Whence the word spirit is derived from breathing, and is therefore, ascribed to the Holy Ghost, the person, proceeding as a breath from the Father and the Son. Therefore, his operations are likened unto the wind, the Saviour says, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearst the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it it cometh, and whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit." John iii. Even as the wind causes the greater part of motions in the air, so the Holy Ghost affects our souls, and moves us to do good; yea, he cleanses them, even as does the wind, the air, and causes the believing to bring forth fruit meet for repentance.

This rushing as of a mighty wind was especially

heard in the house where the disciples had met, and this might signify, that the Gospel, which the disciples were to preach in the power of the Holy Ghost, was to break through into all the world, make low all exalted places, and overcome all the powers that would resist it. Yea, that the disciples and apostles should lift their voices as a trumpet, and by the Spirit, as the spirit of regeneration, bring forth many children unto the Lord Jesus, from every part of the world, through the co-operating influence of the Holy Ghost.

But there was someting else, revealed by this mighty rushing of wind, which caused great astonishment, *For their tongues appeared cloven as if they were fiery, and it sat upon each of them.**

The tongue is an organ of language, and a glorious means to praise God, to bless our fellow man, and to instruct him, to entertain company, and to render company agreeable; yea, to make known to others the thoughts of the heart; and it appears that it pleased the Holy Ghost, to appear among the disciples of Christ, in the form of tongues, thereby to signify, that he would speak through them, to preach the words of the gospel to others, and put into their mouth what to say to the praise of God, and to the edification of their fellowmen; to which Paul alludes when he saith, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." 2 Cor. v. 20.

These tongues appeared as though they were cloven, or divided; an emblem of the manifold gifts and diverse languages, which the Holy Ghost should work in the apostles, namely, that they should preach in diverse languages, the wonders of God, and preach the gospel unto Gentiles, and unto every nation of the earth. Formerly, when the tower of Babel was building, the confusion of tongues was the cause of a great dispersion, into all the world, as it was a judgment upon their pride. But here, on the contrary, by the means of many languages, all nations, tongues, and Gentiles, were to be united by faith unto salvation, into one con-

*Luther's translation.

gregation, and nations to be brought together and united with each other in the unity of faith, so that all nations should speak the language of Canaan, according to the prediction of Isaiah, xix. 18.

But these tongues appeared as being fiery. This was an assurance to the disciples and apostles,

1. That the Holy Ghost would enlighten them, make them lights of the world, in order clearly and fully to set forth what might be obscure, in the writings of Moses and the prophets.

2. That the Holy Ghost, as a spiritual and purifying fire, which burns up as it were all uncleanness with its all-consuming glow, would then cleanse, and purify, not only their hearts, but all the hearts of those who should believe on Christ, through their preaching. So one of the Seraphims flew unto the prophet, having a live coal in his hand, and purified the lips of the prophet. Isa. vi.

3. That the Holy Ghost would inflame them with love toward God, without which influence, they were by nature cold as ice; nay, they were awakened to a fervent zeal, for the honor of God, so that they dreaded no dangers, but regardless of all, preached boldly, and publicly, in the name of the Lord Jesus, unto all, and exhorted them to believe in him, in order to be saved.

These cloven, fiery tongues, *sat themselves upon each of the apostles*, to assure them, that the gifts of the Holy Ghost, would forever abide with them, and ever rest upon them, so as to make them his temple, and to dwell therein.

Second part.—Were these miracles and the circumstances remakable unto them! No less extraordinary were the operations, namely, the out-pouring of the Holy Ghost itself; *for they*, all who were assembled, *were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

The apostles had previously received the Holy Ghost, for they believed that Jesus Christ was the Son of God; this can be said of none, except of those who have the Holy Ghost, inasmuch as faith is the fruit of the Holy Ghost. Gal. v. It is written, "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." 1 Cor.

xii. 3. Moreover, Jesus breathed upon them and said, "Receive the Holy Ghost," John xx. When it is said here, that they received the Holy Ghost, and were filled therewith, we have to make a difference between the gifts of the Holy Ghost, which are common to all, and those gifts which are given to but a few, between the ordinary and extraordinary. Here then we have to understand, besides the ordinary, also the extraordinary, namely, a perfect faith in Christ, a fervent love to God and man, and then also the gifts of wisdom, and knowledge of divine truths, the gifts of working miracles, the gift of speaking many strange languages; and we have also to consider, that before this, they were fishermen, and unlearned, but now having received divine wisdom and knowledge, of the things which God revealed in his word, and to publish them in many strange languages.

For Luke says in the sequel, "*And they began to speak with other tongues.*" Truly, this was an astonishing, and never-heard of occurrence, they, who were before ignorant, at once knew all truth; they who before knew but one language, namely, the language of Canaan, speak in many strange languages, and relate, to the astonishment of all, the great doings of God. Not however, as though they spoke their own language, and were understood by those, who spoke different languages; thus the miracle would not have been with the apostles, but rather with those who heard them; therefore, they spake many languages, as Paul makes mention. Cor. xiv.

And this was the more necessary, as they were to go into all the world, and to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ unto the Gentiles; therefore, they had need of more than one language, they spake them as the Spirit gave them utterance, for all this is wrought by the Holy Ghost, and he imparts it unto each, according to his will. 1 Cor. xii.

APPLICATION.

Behold, beloved friends, in this way our Saviour fulfilled his promise in the most glorious manner, which

he had made unto his disciples, and qualified them, to be his witnesses, not only at Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, but to the ends of the earth. And hereby he fulfilled the manifold prophesies of this rich effusion or out-pouring of the Holy Ghost. Here he poured out water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; and his Spirit upon their seed, and his blessing upon their offspring. Isa. 44. Thus, the Spirit was poured out from on high, and the wilderness made a fruitful field, and the fruitful field accounted a forest. Isa. 32. These were the gifts which the exalted Messiah received for men, after he had led captivity captive. Psalm lxviii. 18.

But none must think, that this great favor of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, was only for the first disciples and apostles. O no, for the Spirit was to be poured out upon all flesh, sons and daughters were to prophecy, old men were to have dreams, and young men to see visions." Joel ii. 28. Hence, Peter observes in his first discourse, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Acts ii. 29. And Paul, assures the believing Galatians, "And because you are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts." Gal. vi 6. If the Holy Ghost, does not now impart such extraordinary gifts, as to speak in many languages, and to work miracles, he still operates, as wind and fire, in the hearts of those, where he has commenced his work, to bring men over into the kingdom of God; into the liberty of the children of God; yea, then he operates powerfully in the heart; he fills such with fear, and dread, on account of sin, and a sense of weakness, and desert of hell: the word of God is as a fire in the heart, whereby man is moved to turn from the love of the world and of sin, unto Jesus; to turn from darkness unto light, from the power of Satan unto God; the heart is melted, and purified through faith, and made warm by divine love; we hear a different language, which was before unknown, which was not acquired of man, but which is only taught by the Holy Ghost; we receive lips, as it were, which acknowledge the name of Jesus, and a tongue which speaks of the great wonders of God.

Thus, and in this manner the Holy Ghost comes upon every heir of the New Testament; upon all who follow the footseps of the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, who are together in union, prayer, and supplication; I repeat it, those who follow the footsteps of the disciples of the Lord Jesus, who are together in prayer and supplication.

For such, who evince great excitements, but which are not caused by the wind of the powerful operations of the Holy Ghost, but by their depraved hearts; by their sinful lusts and affections; such, whose tongues are mute, and as it were, spiritually paralized as to the praise of God, and on the other hand, inflamed of hell, filled with malice and calumniation, full of bitterness, wrath, fury and blasphemy; such, whose mouths are filled with cursings, falsehood and deceit, whose mouth is an open sepulchre, who work deceitfulness with their tongues; such, who, instead of speaking of the great wonders of God, much more speak things unbecoming a christian; such, as are satisfied with the gifts of the Spirit, satisfied with the literal knowledge thereof, who think, that it is sufficient if they can but speak of God, and of his ways, and are very little concerned about the saving gifts of the Holy Ghost, especially about the love which was so great among the primitive christians; such as, although they should live in union, have among them nothing but disunion; among whom, instead of the spirit of love, the spirit of envy, the spirit of hatred, and of bitterness; who, with their lips, speak much of love, but whose hearts are filled with hatred; such who are united in the works of the devil: All such, I say, cannot possibly comfort themselves with becoming partakers of the great blessings of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, as long as they continue in this condition.

But they are the more miserable, the more unhappy; for he that has not the Spirit of Christ is none of his, and he that is none of Christ's, hath no part or interest in the purchased benefits and means of grace, no hopes to have his sins forgiven, nor to be justified, nor to have any right to eternal life. In the distresses and tribulations to which they are subject in this life, they have no

comforter; and, finally, their misery is fully manifested; for they will never inherit the kingdom of God, "twice dead, and plucked up by the roots, they will be cast into everlasting fire."

Therefore, examine yourselves, my friends! and if you are guilty of what I mentioned above, O, do you take into consideration your unhappy condition; look upon the awful, endless misery, that is speedily meeting you. But would you escape that misery, and on the contrary, see the promise of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost fulfilled with you, then you must verily be prepared, as were the disciples of the Lord Jesus. In the first place, believe on Jesus Christ, "for he that believeth on him, as the scriptures saith"—*mark it well, friends*—"as the scriptures saith, out of his (body) belly shall flow rivers of living water." Isa. vii. 38. Tear your hearts loose, from the spirit of the world, close your hearts against it, open them unto the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, that you may be introduced into the liberty of the children of God; so far as you will empty your hearts of the things of the world, so far God will fill them with his Spirit; to this end, pray God fervently and without ceasing, for this precious gift, of the Holy Ghost. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Ghost to them that ask him." Be assiduous in the unity of the Spirit, with prayers and supplication in the temple of the Lord, and also in your temporal dwellings, be together in union and love, and let all hatred and malice depart from you. And you, especially, ought to do so, who contemplate receiving the signs and seals of the love of God in Christ Jesus—you who desire to feed your immortal souls, in a spiritual manner, at the table of the Lord, with the crucified body and shed-blood of Christ. Oh, evince a fervent love toward each other; for, as out of many grains one meal is ground, and one bread baked, and out of many berries, being pressed together, one wine floweth, and mixeth itself together; so shall we all, who, by a true faith, are ingrafted into Christ, be altogether one body, through brotherly love; for if you have received the first fruits of the Spirit,

then walk as those who have received the Spirit, who are influenced by him, like unto those dead bones, upon which the Spirit came, were again brought to life, and stood upon their feet; and so walk ye also, as those who have arisen from the dead, for it is the Spirit that quickeneth; suffer yourselves to be rightly influenced by this heavenly fire of love toward God: "Let your love be strong as death, your jealousy, as the grace, that many waters may not quench it;" purify yourselves, not only from the pollutions of the flesh and of the spirit, but proceed to holiness in the fear of the Lord, and manifest the fruits of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.

If your hearts are thus filled with love toward God, and faith in Christ Jesus, and are at peace with your neighbor; if your mouth is filled with the praise of God, so that you delight to speak of the wonders of the Lord, then will our *Penticost* be a blessed one, then the Holy Ghost will fill you with his light and grace—that what is remaining of weakness, he will take away, he will break the heart of stone, and he will guide you into all truth, strengthen you in every persecution, comfort you in every tribulation, and seal you by his power unto the day of your perfect redemption, unto everlasting life. AMEN.

SERMON XX.

MATTHEW, CHAP. XXII. V. 11—14.

And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment; and he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then saith the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen.

INTRODUCTION.

"God is a light." This is the representation made of him, by the apostle John. 1 John, i. 5. And this is a truth, or description which is applicable to God, in the most extensive and perfect sense. For, inasmuch as the natural light of the sun penetrates all things, and makes all visible, known, lovely and beautiful, and at the same time, is the source of attraction and motion, possessing power to enlighten, and warm dark bodies: even so is God, an eternal and uncreated light of infinite wisdom. He explores the most mysterious, secret and hidden things; nay, even the most secret thoughts and intents of the hearts of mankind. He is also a God of spotless purity, without the least imperfection; nay, he is the very source and foundation of all perfection, and as such, gives life and action to all things, both in the kingdom of nature and the kingdom of grace. "Light is the garment, with which he is clothed." Psalm civ. 2. "He is the Father of lights, from whom cometh down every good and perfect gift, and with whom there is neither variableness or shadow of

turning." James i. 17. As such a light, however, God has no communion with the unfruitful works of darkness, nor with such as are addicted to them. "He is of purer eyes, than to behold iniquity." Hab. i. 13. He is not a God who is pleased with sin; but he is of such holiness that the sinner can never abide his presence, for he is angry with the wicked every day, and hates all workers of iniquity. He will destroy them that speak leasing; the Lord abhors the bloody and deceitful man." Psalm v. 5, 6, 7. Whosoever would enjoy communion with him, must walk in light, even as he is in the light. And as God cannot enlighten the sinner, but through Jesus Christ, the seed of righteousness, who is the light in which the sinner must walk before God, if he would be well-pleasing in the sight of God, and enjoy his communion—even so, must we be enlightened through Jesus Christ, be cleansed by his blood and sanctified by his Spirit, and be clothed with the robe of his righteousness, if we would participate in the inexpressible enjoyment of communion with God. But if this be not the case, and we clothe ourselves with the mask of religion, although we are children of darkness, and thus apply to ourselves the prerogatives of the children of light; God is a light, the all-penetrating rays of whose omniscience search and reveal the most secret thoughts of the heart, and exhibit what manner of children we are. Who takes away the mask, from the face of the hypocrite, strips off his assumed garment of light, and presents him bare and naked before the eyes of the whole world, and will visit them according to their arrogance and presumption, as well as open workers of iniquity, with weeping and gnashing of teeth, in everlasting darkness. This was the fate of the guest at the marriage feast, of whom the blessed Redeemer speaks, in the words of the text.

ARGUMENT.—In these words, we find a peculiar test of the righteousness of God, according to which, he will deal, with all hypocrites and workers of iniquity, in the great and notable day of the Lord, represented by a remarkable parable; in which we are naturally led to contemplate the two following particulars:

DIVISION I. The viewing of the guests; and

II. The sentence which was past upon the unworthy guest.

First part.—In relation to the first particular, we are informed, *"that when the king came in to view the guests."*

In the connection of our text, our blessed Redeemer describes a king, who made a marriage supper for his son, and sent forth his servants, to invite the guests to the wedding, who, however, refused to come; whom he therefore again invited, adding that all things were ready; who then made all manner of frivolous excuses, and even proceeded so far as to mock and kill some of his servants. Upon hearing of which, the king was wroth, and sent forth his armies, to kill these scoffers and murderers, and to burn their city. He then commanded his servants, (after complaining to them that, although the marriage was prepared, the guests were not worthy,) to go into the streets, and invite all whom they should find. In compliance with this command of their king, the servants soon returned, bringing with them all whom they found, both good and bad, so that his table might be filled; *now, therefore*, after all were collected together, and the tables were filled, the king went in to view the guests.

By the *king*, referred to in this passage, is signified none other than God himself, whom Paul, with much emphasis, styles *"the Everlasting King."* 1 Tim. i. But we are also to understand by this king, God the Son, who is often spoken of as a king, Psalm xi, especially as a king of the daughter of Zion, Zach. ix. He speaks of himself, in this wise, John xviii. as he is the glorious person, by whom God made all things in the vast creation, and by whom he will judge the world in righteousness; Acts xvii.; and who on that day will divide the sheep from the goats; Matt. xxv.; and to whom the Father has given all judgment. John v.

This king went in to view the guests. God is omniscient and omnipresent, which renders it unnecessary for him to go from place to place, to see how things are; hence, it is necessary for us to explain this phraseology, which is borrowed from the language of man, in

a manner; applicable to the ideas which the scriptures afford us of God, Accordingly, when men wish to see or contemplate any thing, they approach as near to it as possible; even so may it be said of God, that he went in to see the guests, or those who were seated around the table, as he directed his peculiar attention to them, to observe whether all things were regulated to his mind. For when the rejoicing, on such an occasion, has arisen to the highest pitch, and the company indulge in the greatest freedom, in giving vent to the sentiments and feelings of their hearts, in such cases the cheerfulness of the wine, or refreshments, will prevent a person from keeping many things secret which, on other occasions, he strictly reserved the knowledge of, to himself alone. In such circumstances, therefore, we enjoy the best opportunity to learn what is in the heart of man.

In this way, God looks down, from his high and holy dwelling-place in heaven, upon the children of men. Psalm cii. "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry; but his face is set against them that do evil, and he will root out their remembrance from the earth." Psalm xxxiv. In this way, he shows his continual vigilance, in his kingdom, and that he ever exercises the greatest care and faithfulness towards his people. He is hence represented, as "walking amidst the seven golden candlesticks." Rev. i. 2.; and as "not being far from each one of us." Acts xvii. And he himself says, "can any hide himself, in secret places, that I shall not see him." Jer. xxiii. 24. And again, "neither is there any creature, that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." Heb. iv. 13.

This is abundantly manifested in the case before us, for when the king went in to view the guests, "*he saw one not having on the wedding garment.*" Wedding garments, among the ancients, were white, and it would appear that this guest, had on a garment of a quite different color. But we shall more easily arrive at the spiritual meaning of this, by contemplating the situation of man, in a state of innocence, before his apos-

tacy from God. And in doing this, we find that he was created, in the likeness and after the image of God, which served him, as a garment, to cover his nakedness. This consisted in true righteousnes and holiness. But by Adam's fall this was lost; and hence, God made them clothing out of skins, in order to cover their nakedness; and as a sign unto them, that he would, by the Messiah, the seed of the woman, this real image of God, again present them with the wedding garment, which they had lost. In such deplorable circumstances are all mankind by nature, that they lay naked and exposed in the blood of their impurity. Ezek. xvi. They are altogether impure, and "all their righteousness is as filthy rags." Jer. lxiii. "They are poor and miserable, and blind and naked." Rev. iii. And "they come short of the glory of God." Rom. iii. Now this, by sin inherited nakedness, must again necessarily be covered, and this lost image of God, be again restored to us, if we ever would abide the presence of God. This, however, can never take place, but by reinstating the image of God, in our souls, and clothing us, with his righteousness and holiness, which none other can ever impart to us, but our blessed Mediator and Redeemer, Jesus Christ. And hence, by this wedding garment, we are to understand nothing but the merits and righteousness of Christ; for "Christ is made unto us of God, wisdom, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption." 1 Cor. i.

1. He must therefore, necessarily be put on, if our spiritual nakedness is to be covered. Hence, Jesus admonishes the angel of the church of Laodicea, "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear, and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see." Rev. iii. 18. And the apostle Paul says, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand, let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light." Rom. xiii. 12. And the same apostle when writing to the Ephesians, uses this language, "That ye put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according

to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness." Ephes. iv. 22. And this putting on, is done alone by faith, "For ye are all the children of God, by faith in Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." Gal. iii. 26. In this manner, they become most intimately united to him, so that they can say, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Gal. ii. And such exclaim, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, and my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridge-groom decketh *himself* with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth *herself* with her jewels." Psalm lxi. 10. "And these," said the angel to John, "are they, which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Rev. vii. 14. By such persons as have on the wedding garment, we are consequently to understand, such as really believe in Jesus Christ, and are united by faith unto him, and thereby have received the forgiveness of their sins through his blood, and are clothed with the robe of his righteousness, and who bring forth the fruits of righteousness, and shew their faith active by good works. Gal. v. Such on the other hand, as have not on the wedding garment, are those, who do not sincerely believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and are consequently not purified from their sins, are not clothed with the spotless robe of the Redeemer's righteousness; but on the contrary are clothed with the mantle of impurity, and ungodliness, and are therefore, not to be numbered among the guests of his table. They are such, as are hypocrites, "who draw nigh unto God with their mouths, and serve him with their lips, when at the same time, their hearts are far from him;" and therefore, serve in vain. Such as "declare God's statutes, but hate instruction, and cast his words behind them." Psalm l. Such, in a word, "as are neither cold nor hot, and whom God will therefore, spew out of his mouth." Rev. iii. No marvel, then, that the king should address such an one

in the language of the text, "Friend how camest thou in, not having on the wedding garment?" The Greek word *ekeizein*, signifies properly, a companion, one with whom, we were in habits of the most intimate communion. But it is also used in reference to such, whether they be intimate acquaintances or not, who under the garb of friendship, hide, some malicious design, in order, that they may, at a time least expected, manifest it, to their shame and dismay. Hence, said the Lord of the vineyard, to the labourer, who murmured, on being made equal to those who had not laboured so long, "Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst thou not agree with me for a penny? Take that thine is, and go thy way." Matt. xx. And Jesus also said unto Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him with a kiss, "Friend why camest thou? That is, thou comest unto me under the garb of friendship, but thou evincest a cruel friendship, to betray me into the hands of mine enemies, with a kiss. And there can be no doubt, but this same person, referred to in the text, to whom Jesus also addresses the appellation, of friend; counterfeited the appearance of a worthy guest, he manifested great readiness to comply with the invitation, and accordingly, without hesitation, seated himself at the table, and was ready to participate in the dainties of the feast, which were then to be served up. But *one thing* was yet *lacking*, of which he was reminded, by the king who made the feast,—that he had not on a wedding garment. No wonder, that, as Jesus says, "he was speechless." A similar instance we find recorded by Moses, of our first parent. Adam, after his apostacy from God, being seduced by Eve, who was seduced by the serpent, when God wished to converse with him, shrunk back from his presence, and hid himself. "And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." Gen. iii. And so was this person, who had not on a wedding garment, utterly speechless. And no wonder, for if the "Lord enters into judgment with us, or marks iniquities, who shall be able to stand? Psalm cxxx. "For

I know it of a truth, says Job, that if God will contend with man, he cannot answer him one of a thousand." Job. ix.

Part second.—We come therefore, according to promise, to notice the sentence passed by this king, upon the unworthy guest, "Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

The phraseology, "*Bind him hand and foot;*" is borrowed from the case of those, who as prisoners, are either in prison, or are being led to the place of execution, and who in either of these circumstances, have their hands and feet loaded with fetters. In like manner, did the king command his servants, to bind the poor wretch, who presumptuously ventured into the wedding feast, not having on a wedding garment, "*and to cast him into outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.*" The tenor of this sentence, therefore, has special reference, to the judgment which God passes upon the souls of hypocrites and all the ungodly, immediately after death, and which he will most assuredly pass upon all such, as to soul and body, in the general judgment of the great day. Then he will give his "Holy angels, the command to gather all such together, and cast them into a fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Matt. viii. It refers, in a word, to the everlasting pain and misery, to that everlasting damnation, which will inevitably be visited upon all those, who have not by repentance and faith, sought the forgiveness of their sins, and the sanctification of their souls, in the blood of Jesus Christ, nor are clothed with the spotless robe of his perfect righteousness, so as to enable them to bring forth the fruits of righteousness and holiness. But who, on the contrary, live in all unrighteousness, impurity, and abominations and are thus led captive by the devil at his will, to do his drudgery; nay, who, as audacious hypocrites, and presumptuous formalists, receive the emblems of the crucified body, and shed blood, of the blessed Redeemer, as signs and seals to lead others to believe in their being in communion and

favor with God, when they know, full well, "that they have not God in all their thoughts."

And as the king commanded his servants, to cast him who was bound hand and foot, into outer darkness, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth; so will God, also, assuredly deal with those who have thus been living in hypocrisy, and ungodliness, and have thus shamefully abused the signs and seals, of his covenant, if they are transplanted by death from time to eternity, without a sincere repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. Yes, most assuredly, brethren, will such have to take up their abode among the damned, where every ray of hope and mercy, are clean gone forever. *Then* there will be no feet, by which the sinner can flee to the mercy of God, or escape from the wrath to come. There the sinner will no longer enjoy the use of hands in order to do good. There no light will appear, by which he can learn the will of God, and his duties towards him. But he will be bound with chains of everlasting *darkness*, "For their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched: and they shall be an abhoring unto all flesh." Is. lxvi. For says the Saviour, "They shall go away into everlasting fire." Mark ix. "And the smoke of their torments shall ascend up forever and ever." Rev. xiv.

APPLICATION.

Here therefore brethren, are exhibited in a most striking and perfect manner, both the righteousness and holiness of God. "He, of a truth, is light, and in him, there is no darkness," and "whosoever says that he enjoys communion with him, whilst he walks in darkness, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." No brethren, neither here in this, nor in a coming world, can any son or daughter of Adam, enjoy the communion and favor of God, in whose soul Jesus Christ the Sun of Righteousness, has not arisen; for remember the express declaration of God, "That nothing impure; none who live in abominations, or who maketh a lie; but only such, whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life, shall ever be permitted to enter in at the gates of the New Jerusalem."

O, how necessary is it then, for us collectively and individually, to enter into a thorough, and personal examination of our hearts, and consciences, in order that we may all arrive at a true knowledge of our condition, as in the presence of God, so that we may not by our wilful neglect, be the guilty cause of our own damnation! Oh, how necessary is it, for us, if we would enjoy communion and favor with God, and receive the visible and sensible signs and seals of these unspeakable blessings at his table, to see to it, that we appear among his people, the guests at this feast of love, having on the wedding garment! How necessary for us, to entirely deny ourselves all ungodliness and worldly lusts; to cast ourselves at the feet of Immanuel Jesus, and call upon him for the forgiveness of all our sins,—to wash and purify our souls from iniquities, and to clothe us, with the robe of his meritorious righteousness, so that our spiritual nakedness, may no longer appear! How necessary for us, before we approach the holy table, that we, by the hand of a living and active faith, lay hold of, and put on this wedding garment! For otherwise, it will be impossible for us to please God, or to enjoy the saving benefits, which the great Master of this feast, is willing and ready to bestow. For how did the man fare, who ventured into the feast, not having on the wedding garment? Ah, brethren, this was the consequence of his awful presumption and folly, "he was bound hand and foot, and cast into outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth." When an individual approaches the holy supper of our Lord, without the wedding garment, he thereby greatly increases his guilt and sin, before God, inasmuch, as this wedding garment, has so often been profferred to him, but he has invariably refused to put it on; but rather despised it, and preferred appearing in a garment of his own choice; the garment of his own imaginary piety and righteousness, and in which he actually appears at the Lord's table, and eats and drinks damnation to himself.

Now brethren, as we contemplate appearing around the table of the Lord to-morrow, for the purpose of celebrating the dying love of Jesus, I pressed upon

your serious attention, last Sabbath, the indispensible necessity, of personal examination, by way of preparation for the deep solemnities before us, and I hope you have received, and by the grace of God, have been led to comply with this, as God knows, well intended counsel. I appear not before you, on this occasion to discourage you, or by the representation of the awful doom of him, who had not on the wedding garment, to fill you with fear and terror; as though no one dare venture to approach the table of the Lord, without he is perfectly free from sin; but I appear before you, to entreat and beseech you for Heaven's sake, to endeavor to appear around this sacred board, clothed in the wedding garment of the Lamb, and to look upon the example and lot of him who had not on a wedding garment, as a beacon, to warn you from splitting on the same rock, and thus making ship-wreck of your soul's salvation. Oh then, come with hearts filled with the love of Jesus. Come with expanded and enlarged desires of soul. Come in a word, with the ardent desire of meeting with, and embracing Jesus in this feast of fat things, as the chief among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely and precious to the soul." AMEN.

SERMON XXI.

1 JOHN, CHAP. IV. V. 13.

Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us because he hath given us of his Spirit.

INTRODUCTION.

However great and precious a blessing, a soul anxiously desirous of salvation, may deem the enjoyment of the favor and communion of God in Christ Jesus; even so necessary and beneficial, is it for us to enjoy the most undoubted and indisputable evidence of this favor and communion, in our own souls.

Mankind are naturally inclined to flatter themselves, and to pass the most favorable judgment upon their own condition, and are inclined to settle down, in the imagination that they are righteous; that they are pious and holy; when they are, at the same time, yet in their impenitence and depravity; are yet utterly destitute of the saving grace of God; are far from his righteousness, and consequently are in a state of condemnation and death, in the sight of him, who searches the hearts and tries the reigns, of the children of men. Of this fatal delusion, we have a most striking example, in the conduct of the members of the church of Laodicea, who had indulged in the most pleasing imaginations, concerning the security and prosperity of their spiritual condition; when, at the same time, it was anything but what they imagined; and they were hence, subjected to the mortification, of hearing from him, who knew the inmost thoughts and intents of their hearts, this cutting rebuke, "Because thou sayest I am rich, and increased in goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art *wretched*, and *miserable*, and *poor*, and *blind*, and *naked*." Rev. iii. 17.

What, therefore, can be more necessary—what can be more beneficial and advantageous to us, than not to trust merely to our own understanding, or that we be careful, not to venture our soul's salvation upon a blind imaginary safety, until it is too late to make preparation for death, judgment and eternity? Oh, how necessary, and how wise is it for us, to enter into an impartial and thorough examination of the very thoughts and intents of our hearts, so as to find out our true situation, as in the sight of God, and become diligent in making our calling and election sure; according to the admonition of the apostle Paul to the Corinthians: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; try yourselves." 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

But the Spirit of God, has not only pressed upon the children of men the solemn duty, of personal and thorough examination into the state of their souls; he has, also, furnished the most indubitable tests, by which each of us may safely arrive at the knowledge of our true state, as it is before God. But, more especially, has the Spirit of God furnished us with unequivocal and essential evidences of this all-important matter, in this first general epistle of John, among which we find the one contained in the words of our text, one of the most striking and decisive, "Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, because that he hath given us of his Spirit."

Connection.—In the connection, whence our text is taken, we find the apostle John, earnestly exhorting believers to the exercise of brotherly love, not only because sincere and unfeigned love, has its origin from God; but also, because those who have this heaven-born principle implanted in their souls, give unquestionable evidence that they are born of God, are thereby led to a saving acquaintance with him, and are thus transformed into the image of him who is *love itself*. Nay, because this love unites us unto God in the most intimate manner, so that he dwells in us, and permits us to enjoy the most cordial communion with him. In order, that no one may flatter himself, on false grounds, that he enjoys this blessed communion with God, and thereby make shipwreck of his soul's eternal interests, he adds

this additional test, in the words of our text: "Hereby we know, that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit."

CONTENTS.—*These words consequently contain in them, a decisive evidence of a believer's communion with God, exhibited here as the surest means of leading every sincere inquirer into a knowledge and assurance of the true state of his soul, as pertains to the great concerns of eternity.*

These words naturally divide themselves into two parts:

DIVISION I. They contain a description of a believer's communion with God; and

II. A decisive *test*, or *evidence*, by which we may become fully convinced, and assured, concerning this communion.

First part.—The description of this communion of believers, is found in the emphatic words, "*that we dwell in him; namely, in God; and he in us.*"

When the apostle describes the believer, as dwelling in him, he has special reference to God the Father, who sent forth his only begotten and well-beloved Son, into the world, that we might live through him: John iii.; but by this language of the apostle, God the Son, is, by no means, excluded; for as he himself testifies, our communion is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. John i. 3. Yes, brethren, the Son of God, the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, must necessarily be included in this description, in the text, "For no one can come unto the Father, and enjoy communion with him, but alone by and through Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and man; as he himself declares, when he says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; *no man* cometh unto the Father but by me." John xiv. 6. Out of Christ, God is, and ever must be to the sinner, a *consuming fire;* but whosoever is reconciled unto God, by a true and living faith in Jesus Christ. is washed in his blood, and sanctified by his Spirit; enjoys the sweetest communion with God, which, however, is

so exalted and wonderful, that the heart of man cannot fully conceive, and much less, can the tongue of mortal man fully express it.

For in this situation, a soul does not only dwell in God, and enjoy the most intimate converse and communion, and walk with God, as one bosom friend with another, or as a *son* with his *father*, or as a bride with the bridegroom; but *God also takes up his abode in his soul*, and constitutes it a temple of the Holy Ghost, in a supernatural, inexpressible, and inconceivable manner, so that he loves God with all his heart, with a conscience void of offence, and with an unfeigned faith; and as love is the bond of perfection, the soul of the believer thereby becomes most intimately united to God, and in him, it emphatically *lives*, and *moves*, and has its very *being*. But, as such a soul has her dwelling-place or home, in God, so God also constitutes the soul, his temple or dwelling-place, in which he has, as it were, his fire and his hearth, for inasmuch as believers cleave unto the Lord, "they are filled with all the fulness of God." Ephs. iii. 19. That is, they are filled with the majesty of God, who descends into their souls, and takes possession of the inner man, and penetrates the inmost recesses of the soul, with his holy presence, in such a manner that they actually realize and feel it; here he dwells by faith in their hearts, in all his majesty and glory, and hence, says the apostle Paul, in reference to all true believers, that "God is in them of a truth." 1 Cor. xiv. 25. And this is what God has expressly promised them, when he says, "I will dwell with them, and walk with them." So that each believer may, with propriety, bear the appellation which God, by the mouth of the prophet Ezekiel, attaches to the whole church, when he says. "the name of the city from that day, shall be, "*The Lord is there.*" Ezekiel xlviii. 35.

From this intimate union and communion of believers with God, arises the principle of perseverance in this communion, viz. that he continues to *dwell* in *God*, and *God* in *him;* for this union and communion is not of such a nature as to endure but for a season, and then again to cease. No, brethren; but on the other hand

it is of such an enduring nature, that nothing in the whole compass of the things of time and sense, is capable of severing, or abolishing it; but where it has, in reality, been commenced, it will persevere and endure to all eternity; believers abide in God, for they know full well, from happy experience, that he is the chief good, which alone can satisfy the desires of the immortal soul, and hence, they exclaim with Asaph, "Whom have I in heaven *but thee?* and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever." Psalm lxxiii. 25, 26.

And why should believers forsake the fountain of living waters, and hew out unto themselves broken cisterns, which can hold no water; when they experience every day and every hour, the utter deception and vanity of all sublunary things? No, brethren, they count all, out of God, but loss and dung.

This love to God, transcends their love to any thing in heaven or on earth, so that they exclaim as did the apostles of our blessed Redeemer, "To whom shall we go; thou hast the words of eternal life." John vi. 68. They do not suffer, even the storms of tribulations, adversity and temptation, to incline them to turn away from the Saviour; for their house is built upon a rock, and hence, although gusts may arise, the waters may descend, and winds and storms may all dash against this house; yet it will not fall, for it is built upon a rock. Matt. vii. 25. They are so completely founded upon God, that they persevere unto the end, and remain faithful until death, for their strength and power, through grace, is so great, that the very gates of hell shall and can never prevail against them; the bonds of their love are so strongly connected, that neither death, nor all the infernal powers of hell, shall ever be able to sever them; for their love is, in a word, "stronger than death; the coals thereof are as coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame; many waters cannot quench, nor the floods drown it." Cant. iii. "Do they live, they live unto the Lord; do they die, they die unto the Lord; so that, whether they live or die, they are the Lords." Rom. xiv. And they are therefore assured, "that neither

death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate them from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus their Lord." Rom. viii. 38.

But, as we have before intimated, as believers thus continue in God, so on the other hand, God continues in them; his love, his faithfulness towards them, is unchangeable and incapable of being rent asunder, as he himself so emphatically declares, when he says, "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." Isa. liv. 10.

Second part.—The cause and motive inducing believers thus to love God, and to dwell in him, and he in them, as John informs us, is, that *"they know this, because he hath given them of his Spirit."*

The gifts and communications of the Holy Ghost, are an exceedingly great and precious favor of God, which was, in some measure, bestowed upon believers, under the Old Testament; but so sparingly, that John could yet say of the time when Christ made his appearance here on earth, that "the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified." John vii. 39. But Jesus, after he had purged away our sins by his blood, was exalted to God's right hand in heaven, and received and sent forth the promise of the Holy Ghost. Acts ii.

Now this Spirit, the Lord Jesus Christ bestows in the days of the New Testament, in rich measure, not any longer, as under the Levitical economy, sparingly, or as it were, but in drops; in rich abundance, as he had promised centuries before, by the mouth of the prophet, Joel iii. "And it shall come to pass in the last days, (saith God,) I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; and on my servants, and on my handmaids, I will pour out in those days of my Spirit." Hence, the blessed Redeemer exclaims, "he that believeth on me, out of his belly or body, shall spring forth fountains of living waters;" this, he said, as John well

remarks, "of the Spirit which they should receive who believed on him." John viii. Each believer, therefore, who turns unto God, by sincere repentance, and a true and living faith in Jesus Christ, receives the invaluable gifts of the Holy Ghost; for God himself bestows, and sends down of his Spirit into the hearts of his people, and condescends to dwell in them himself, as in his palace or temple, as Paul expressly declares, "know ye not, that your bodies are temples of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, and which ye have received from God." 1 Cor. vi.

It is remarkable, that the apostle says in our text, "that he hath *given us* OF HIS SPIRIT; by which he would teach us, that believers do not receive *all the fulness of the Holy Ghost*, according to his infinitude, inasmuch as our finite capacity is utterly incapable of comprehending his fulness in this sense; hence, it can only be said of the blessed Redeemer, that "in him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," and that "the Spirit was poured out upon him, without measure." John iii. But the apostle would teach us, by this, that believers do not all receive the same measure of the Spirit, but one receives more, and another less, according to the measure of his capacity, as the apostle asserts, that "there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." 1 Cor. 12.

Where this Spirit is imparted unto believers, it is soon revealed by its gracious operations, as a spirit of grace and supplication, of faith and love, of wisdom and knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord,—here, he teaches, and enlightens, and instructs believers, and leads them into all truth, so that they are lead to comprehend the things of the Spirit, and with opened eyes, they see wondrous things out of the law of God; hence says John, "Ye have received the unction of the Holy One, and ye know all things;" and he remaineth with you, so "that ye have not need that any one teach you." 1 John ii. He begets them again unto new creatures, and unto a new life of the spirit from above, as a spirit who giveth life in Christ Jesus. He enkindles in them, a new light, so that they behold the glory of the Lord face to face. He penetrates them with the breezes of

his love, so that they remain no longer worldly, but become spiritually minded, and now seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God, and no longer the things which are below." Col. iii. He teaches them to call upon the father as a spirit, in spirit and in truth; nay, he prays in them; and with groans which cannot be uttered, he presents their wants and necessities before the face of their heavenly Father; and enables them "with filial confidence to cry Abba, Father!" Gal. iv. He leads them in a plain and even path. He fills them with all the precious fruits of righteousness, so that they become conformed to the image of the Son of God; nay, so that they become partakers of his divine nature; he endows them with divine strength and power, so as to enable them to persevere, under all crosses, tribulations, and adversities, until death. He affords them the strongest comforts, in all their trials and adversities, and temptations, so that they enjoy strong consolation even in death, for they enjoy righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost? Rom. xiv.

No marvel therefore, that the apostle represents all this as a proof of the believer's continual communion with God, when he says, "*In this we know*," "Because God hath given us of his Spirit."

The original word, which is here rendered, *we know*, implies a fundamental and thorough knowledge, which imparts unto us a vital sense of these things, growing out of an adequate experience of these truths in our own hearts, so that not we ourselves alone, but also others, may from the most indubitable evidence, judge of our true estate.

And verily, as the Lord our God has given unto believers of his Spirit, they may hence infer, on the safest grounds, that they never shall fall, from this soul-enlivening communion, but abide in God, and God in them; for the Holy Ghost remains continually with them, according to his promise, "My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put into thy mouth shall not depart out of thy mouth, saith the Lord, from henceforth and forever." Is. 59. And the blessed Redeemer imparts the same assurance, "I will

pray the Father, says he, and he will send you the comforter, which shall abide with you forever." John iv. If therefore, this Spirit of God, abides with his beliving children forever, they consequently shall abide *in God*, and *God* in them, for God and his Spirit are one, and never can be separated. This Spirit is an earnest to them, of their inheritance, unto the day of their redemption, by which they are sealed as the Lord's, as Paul says. "It is God who has established you together with Christ, and has anointed and sealed you, and has given you the earnest of his Spirit." 2 Cor. i.

It is for this purpose, that God has given them of his Spirit, so that this union between them and their God, may be rendered more permanent, and abiding; for it is the work of the Spirit to sanctify believers more and more,—to rend assunder the fetters of darkness, and to render them more and more meet for communion with God. And although it may happen perchance, that they may through imprudence, fall into sin, this Holy Spirit will not permit them to continue in this fallen condition, but he will raise them up, without delay, so that they may evince, more fidelity and precaution, in all their walk with God, and to work out their soul's salvation with fear and trembling, as we have examples in David, Solomon, Peter, and many others. It is therefore, with appropriate and solemn emphasis, that the apostle says, "*Hereby we know*, that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit." This believers well know,—of this, they enjoy the most decisive and conscious evidence, and readily venture their whole salvation upon it; nay, with this assurance, they are ready to sail, with full spread sails, upon the tempestuous waves of this world, down the boisterous tide of time, into the peaceful haven of a blessed rest in a glorious eternity; out of this assurance, they continually draw the most precious joys and consolations, for the encouragement of their souls. In a word, this assurance; is to them a source of the most exalted, enrapturing and unspeakable felicity; for, by this Spirit, they are enabled, not only to enjoy all the blessings, which flow from communion

with God in a life of grace, but they are also led, to anticipate, on a foundation, which will never deceive them, a participation in all those ennobling and soul-thrilling pleasures which are at God's right hand forever more. Hence, the believer exclaims, "I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life; neither angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, can separate me from the love of God in Christ Jesus my Lord." Rom. viii.

APPLICATION.

O, that we all might enjoy this bliss of the true child of God? O that all of us who appear at present, here in the special presence of God, might participate in this conscious and indubitable assurance of union and communion with him? But O, brethren, where shall we find such, as can rejoice in this blessed hope, and can say indeed and in truth, "Hereby we know, that God dwells in us, and we in him; because he hath given us of his Spirit?"

Blessed is that people, blessed is that man, whose God is, in such a connection, the Lord! But what is man, that the Lord should be mindful of him, or the Son of man that he should have mercy upon him?—My tongue is unable to express it; for a holy amazement has seized upon me, and astonishment penetrates the inmost recesses of my soul, that such poor, wretched, lost, and hell-deserving sinners; who by nature and practice, are in reality poor and miserable, and blind, and naked; nay, dead in trespasses and in sins; who have been wallowing in all manner of sinful abominations, should be objects, to which, the High, and Holy One, whose throne is the heavens, and the earth his footstool, who lives and reigns forever and ever, should condescend so far, and stoop so low, as to call them into communion with himself, out of pure love towards them, in Christ Jesus his only begotten and well beloved Son; nay, that he should bestow *himself* upon them, so that he *dwells* in *them*, and *they* in *him*, so closely, that not all the powers of earth and hell, com-

bined, can ever separate them from his love! But my dear friends, only such, can with joy, draw water out of this well of salvation, who have received of the Spirit of God; and only hereby can we know, that we dwell *in God*, and he *in us*. This Spirit alone, is the means of uniting the believer inseparably unto God. Only by this means, are his children, led to an experimental acquaintance with him, and does he impart unto them, all the riches of his goodness and his grace.

Thrice happy people! A holy calmness and serenity pervades their souls, for they enjoy the peace of God, which passes all understanding; upbraidings of conscience, fear and trembling, which lay hold of the impenitent sinner, are utterly banished from them; the dread and terror of death and hell, are no longer known to them. No crosses, no tribulations, no adversities or temptations, can any longer cast them down; for they enjoy communion with that God, who feasts them with the rich provisions of his house, and regales them with the streams of love and mercy, as with a flood.

But I again ask, where are such as have, by sincere repentance, bid adieu to all the lying vanities of an ungodly world, and by an unfeigned and living faith, have thus fled to Jesus, for eternal life; who are thereby inseparably united unto him, so as to enjoy communion with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ? Where are those who can say, of a truth, that they enjoy the sweet and delightful fruits of this communion, such as peace, love, and joy in the Holy Ghost?

Let us just, for a few moments, contemplate this indubitable evidence afforded us in the text, a participation in the gift of the Spirit, and we shall soon be convinced; for if any man have received of this Spirit, he cannot but feel and experience it; for we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit of God, that we may know how richly he has blessed us. Such an one must consequently know, that his soul is enlighted, sanctified and renewed unto the image of God; filled with all the fruits of righteousness; nay, established in union with God, and sealed by his Spirit, unto the day of perfect redemption. But O, how few have any experimental knowledge of these things! If we

contemplate the life and conduct, even of those who bear the name of christians, how many do we find to be estranged from God, and the life out of God! Their hearts' desires are rivetted to the world; to its lusts, its riches, honors, pleasures, and its deceitful and lying vanities. They go on in the unfruitful works of darkness; and their increasing and multiplied iniquities ties form a partition, to exclude them from the favor and communion of God; for how can light have communion with darkness, or Christ with Belial? They are *in the world*, and the *world* is *in them*, and their hearts are so rivetted to it, that they will not suffer themselves to be torn loose from it; but, notwithstanding all the admonitions, warnings and chastisements, which have been visited upon them, they still *abide in the world*, and the *world in them;* so that they despise God, and communion with him; they trample under foot his proffered mercies, even the blood of the everlasting covenant, and if not in so many words, yet by their actions they exclaim, "depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways."

Positive necessity requires, therefore, that all such be renewed in the Spirit of their minds; for what does it profit, to hear again and again of the outpouring of the Spirit of God upon the Apostles, and that we celebrate this feast, in commemoration of that glorious event? What I ask, will all this profit us, if we ourselves continue to be as a dry and barren tree, in which there are no signs of life or fruitfulness? Do we desire to enjoy a well-founded hope, of eternal life? then, we must seek a participation in this Spirit of God; for "whosoever hath not the Spirit of Christ, remember, is none of his." Where the Spirit of God is, however, *there*, there is liberty, viz. freedom from sin and unrighteousness, and there, all the blessed fruits of the Spirit, are brought forth, to the praise of the glory of God's grace.

But, oh, how deplorable is the condition of such, who are yet strangers to all these blessed operations, and fruits of the Spirit! They are shut out from this blessed communion with God, and are yet under the galling yoke and tyranny of the devil; they are subject to the lashings of a guilty conscience, and to all the

fear and terrors of death and damnation, is already in this world, they are deprived of all peace and comfort; and in the world to come, they will be an abhorring to all flesh.

Turn, then, my dear friends, with earnest supplication and prayer to God, and entreat and beseech him, to send down his holy Spirit into your hearts; seek, by sincere repentance and faith, to press into the communion and favor of God, and by a holy life and conduct, to become more and more united unto him, so that he may dwell in you, and you in him. Bid adieu to sin and Satan, and let not sin any longer reign in your mortal bodies; but use the things of this world so as not to abuse them. The life which you live, in the flesh, be sure to live by faith on the Son of God, who has purchased you at the expense of his own blood. Then will God, of a truth, impart unto you the spirit of adoption, to bear testimony to your souls, that you are his children, his heirs, and joint-heirs with Christ, to everlasting glory. AMEN.

TI. 2009. 084 06530